



# THE INDEPENDENT

Thursday 16 October 1997

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## TODAY'S NEWS

### New flu advice: no handshakes

A new guide by the Consumer Health Information Centre, published yesterday, demolishes the idea that the commonest way of catching flu or colds is through coughs and sneezes. In fact, the most likely route is shaking hands with an infected person and then rubbing your eyes. The guide also says that sitting in a draught, or getting caught in the rain do not lead to catching colds. Page 5

### Honeytrap sting

An elaborate 'honeytrap' sting caught the Tory MP Piers Merchant, who is resigning from Parliament. The Sunday Mirror video-recorded him having sex with a former nightclub dancer, who had previously complained of being 'used' by him. He was ensnared in the York flat of his one-time friend, Anthony Gilberthorpe. Page 7

### Kohl's successor

Wolfgang Schauble, the German politician who has been confined to a wheelchair after a failed assassination attempt, has been named by Chancellor Helmut Kohl as his preferred successor. However, Kohl is expected to stay until 1999. Page 16

### Tribal warfare



A 'Wild West' atmosphere is engulfing the Highlands of Papua New Guinea as fortune-hunters mingle with tribes and unemployed drifters in a society on the edge of civilisation. Richard Lloyd Parry sends a report from the badlands. Page 13

### Black vanishes

A well-known life insurance company has ditched a brochure with a black man on the cover and reprinted it with a white woman there instead. The switch has earned Axa Equity and Law a complaint to the Commission for Racial Equality. Page 3

### SEEN & HEARD

Many airlines already offer a limousine fitted with minibar and telephone to transport the weary traveller, but one man in New York has decided to go further. His cars come fully equipped with a personal stripper who will fix a cocktail and remove her clothes in time to the music as the driver speeds down the highway. At £275 a throw Strip-tease-To-Go is not cheap, but Chris Lundquist, who dreamt up the idea, said it is no less popular for that. He bristles at the idea that he might be selling sex. It is 'the pure romance of sensual impressions in a nice limousine'. It is understood there are no plans to introduce a similar service on the London Underground.

## Earthquake victim: Can they solve the art jigsaw?



Architectural damage: The broken face of St Rufino, by Giotto, which fell from the ceiling of the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi during the recent earthquakes in Umbria, central Italy. The fresco is being recovered by local experts. On page 17 we have exclusive photographs of the damage to the basilica. Tomorrow's photographs will focus on the quakes' human toll. Photograph: Brian Harris

## Historic challenge to the nation's Green Belt

A vast housing development on farmland in the Home Counties has been given the go-ahead - the biggest challenge to the Green Belt for a generation. Nicholas Schoon says that the Government will come under intense pressure to reverse a decision which could open the floodgates for new waves of suburban sprawl.

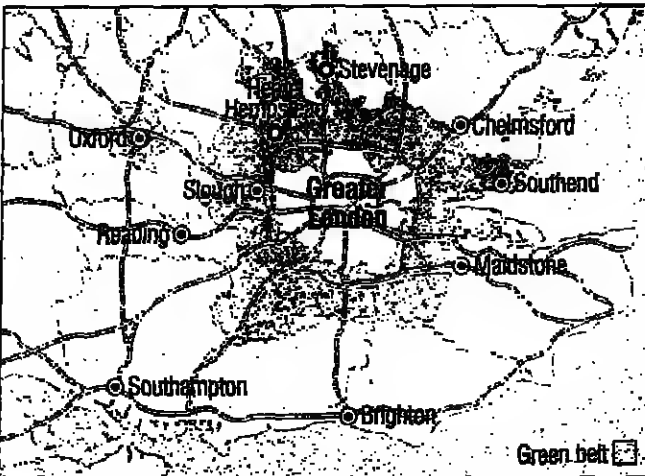
Hertfordshire County Council is planning up to 10,000 new homes on Green Belt land near Stevenage - in effect, a new small town. It brings the debate about where to build the huge quantity of new homes needed in Britain over the next two decades to boiling point. Not only is it one of the biggest single developments on rural land being contemplated in Britain since the last generation of New Towns. More importantly, at 800 hectares, it would be the biggest single loss of Green Belt land for decades.

The Government is projecting a demand for 4.4 million extra homes by 2016 - a 23 per cent increase. The new Government's policy is that the forecasts are realistic and the demand should be met. So if they are to be built, then many of them will have to go on greenfield sites. The awkward question is - how many?

Green groups and local residents are pressing John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, to intervene and overrule Hertfordshire's decision. His Tory predecessor John Gummer, joined them.

Mr Gummer, now a back bench Tory MP, said: "If you give developers the cheaper, easier option of building on greenfield they will always go for it - you have to make it much harder for them, and much easier for them to choose derelict and urban sites."

Environmentalists agreed. "Labour must call in this development," said Simon Festing of the Friends of the Earth. Neil Sinden, of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said: "The Government's household growth projections are a real threat to the continued role of green belts, which have had huge public support for decades."



For many years, Conservative and Labour governments have regarded the Green Belts as sacrosanct. The designation, which keeps rural land around big cities free of development, dates back to 1938. It has been the main weapon of both national and local planners in stopping towns from growing outwards ever further and joining together.

But the policy is under unprecedented strain. Many towns surrounded by belts have now grown right up to the inside edge of them. There is little countryside left inside, and what there is likely to be fiercely protected by residents.

Each year, an area of countryside the size of Bristol is urbanised. Census statistics show that each day 300 people leave Britain's biggest cities to live in rural areas.

About half of all new housing development now happens in previously developed areas, chiefly on redundant and derelict sites inside towns. The last Government wanted to push this proportion up to 60 per cent; the new one has not yet decided whether to accept this target.

In Hertfordshire, more than half the county's remaining countryside has been designated as Green Belt, giving it extra protection from development. The county council has been drawing up its Structure Plan, a strategic blueprint covering the period 1991 to 2011. A government-appointed inspector has already approved the bulk of it after a public inquiry, including the loss of Green Belt. The plan cleared one of its final hurdles on Tuesday when the council's Environment Committee voted to submit it for a final round of consultation.

It was passed by just one vote, with councillors of the ruling Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition defeating the Conservatives. It will be for the smaller district councils in Hertfordshire to implement the structure plan as they grant planning permission to developers.

Thousands of people have objected and the development will make Stevenage almost merge with nearby Hitchin - something the Green Belt was meant to stop. But the county argues that it has little choice. Much more urban building would mean "town cramming" and the loss of parks and playing fields.

## Zinfandel?

Don't they swim in the Bahamas?



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42 WEATHER The Eye, page 10  
TELEVISION The Eye, page 12  
CROSSWORDS Page 32 and the Eye, page 9

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## COLUMN ONE

### Mayor takes crunch from the Big Apple

The taming of the Big Apple continues apace. Times Square has lost most of its sex joints and addicts. The taxi drivers are under orders to be nice and speak English too. Now, it seems, the City That Never Sleeps is to be told it must sleep. Or at least let others sleep.

No, the subway trains are not being stopped at midnight; the elevated tracks in Queens will still rattle and roar at three in the morning just as they do at three in the afternoon. Nor are we talking of a curfew on the traffic that seems to be at rush hour pitch at all hours of the night.

But the babble that is part of what defines New York the city - the horns, the buzz of the clubs, even the hum of a million air conditioning units, all that must cease. Or if not cease, it must be lowered to volumes that allow those folks who prefer to tuck in at midnight actually to rest.



That is the message of a new ordinance passed by the City Council this week that will triple fines on people found responsible for excessive decibel emission. Make a racket when the moon is up and your wallet will burn.

This is one bill that Rudolph Giuliani, the Mayor (did I hear dictator?), will be rushing to sign.

He is up for re-election next month, and making New York "livable" is his ticket to another four years in Gracie Mansion. A ticket, by the way, that the grateful voters are almost certain to grant him.

To whom will the ordinance give pause? To dog owners, for sure. If your mut barks at night, the fine may reach \$525 (£332). A loud TV could cost you \$1,050 (£664). You thought the cable bill was bad? Let you car alarm sound for more than three minutes and your pain may top

\$2,100. Similarly scorching fines are promised to bars with the volume turned too high on their music and drivers who like to lean on their horns. (Here, that means everyone).

Many city dwellers will applaud the measure, of course, especially those in so-called residential areas that have still not been able to withstand the spread of the clubs and bars. "New Yorkers are never going to be listening to crickets at night," said Councilman Gifford Miller. "We're just trying to make it a little saner."

But bar owners are protesting. "This is going to kill business," remarked one yesterday. The New York Nightlife Association barked: "We're not saying nightclubs should be exempt from noise codes. But there has to be a certain amount of tolerance. The city that never sleeps gets its name from licensed nightclubs." — David Osborne

## PEOPLE



Family values: Glenn Hoddle, with his wife Anne, and their children Zoe, Zara and Jamie as they appeared in the breakfast cereal TV commercial

### Hoddle dropped from 'perfect family' ad

The makers of Shredded Wheat have dropped a television advertisement starring Glenn Hoddle and his family because it is "inappropriate" to use it following the break up of the England coach's marriage.

Cereal Partners, makers of the Shredded Wheat, said yesterday they were dropping the advertising campaign because they feared it would cause the family distress.

The company's statement said: "We viewed them as the rest of the country did, as a terrific family. We were therefore surprised and saddened to hear the announcement of the Hoddles' separation. Of course, under the circumstances, we do not feel it is appropriate to run the advertisement in future because we would not want to cause discomfort to viewers, or indeed Glenn and his family."

Cereal Partners' advertising agency, McCann-Erickson, has promoted the cereal as a breakfast with strong family associations ever since it started using the former Ireland football manager Jack Charlton and his grandchildren at the beginning of the Nineties. It started using Glenn Hoddle, his wife and three children in May following his appointment

as national coach. Advertising industry experts estimate that Hoddle would have been paid up to £100,000 for a year-long endorsement deal with the cereal company.

John Gorman, England's assistant coach and a friend of Hoddle's for 15 years, said yesterday that the break up of the marriage was unconnected with his role as England coach: "It was not the pressure, it was nothing to do with football. No one else was involved."

Mr Hoddle, whose popularity with the fans has saved him from the usual harsh treatment meted out by the tabloid press to England managers, had been married for 18 years. He met his wife at school in Harlow, Essex, when he was 15.

The former Tottenham midfielder is a born-again Christian who, with the exception of the Shredded Wheat ad, has kept his private and family life out of the public eye. The end of his marriage was announced by the Football Association in a statement which said it was a private matter unrelated to his job as England coach.

— Paul McCann, Media Correspondent

## UPDATE

### SOCIETY

#### Benefit system breaking up families

Children of separated parents are missing out on regular contact with their fathers because of housing problems, it was revealed yesterday. The homeless charity, Shelter, says hundreds of fathers end up homeless in cramped conditions after a relationship breakdown.

Many are unable to have their children to stay because there is not enough room or the conditions are so poor, both of which can lead to a breakdown in the relationship between the single father and their children, it claims. The charity says the problems arise because local councils often fail to recognise a single father's responsibility for accommodating his children. Chris Holmes, director of Shelter, said: "It is appalling that many children's valuable time with their fathers is being disrupted by housing problems."

### DIET

#### Tomatoes help keep heart healthy

Eating cooked tomatoes could halve your risk of heart attacks, a new study revealed yesterday. The study, which is published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* followed 3,000 men from nine European countries and looked at those who had heart attacks and those who had not.

The team from the University of North Carolina took fat samples from all the men which revealed what they had been eating. They found that in the healthy men there was a much higher level of an anti-oxidant called lycopene. The most common source of lycopene is cooked tomatoes such as tomato paste, tomato soup or pizzas, although the high cheese content of pizzas makes experts reluctant to suggest eating these.



### HEALTH

#### Salmonella risk from pet reptiles

Pet snakes and lizards pose a significant salmonella risk to babies, doctors warned yesterday. A study in the journal *Archives of Disease in Childhood* reported on two children, one 11 days old and the other eight weeks, who both became ill from salmonella infection.

In the youngest child, the bug was acquired from the family's pet green iguana, which appeared perfectly healthy. The child's symptoms lasted for six months. The father of the second child bred snakes, 15 of which shared the family home. The same strain of salmonella was isolated from four of the snake species.

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### Seventy-two questions to make Clinton squirm

When President Clinton gets home soon from his current trip around South America, there will be a fun little puzzle waiting for him. Call it a sex quiz. It's author is Paula Jones - or rather her lawyers.

Ms Jones, the former Arkansas state employee who is pursuing a peculiarly lurid sexual harassment suit against the President, is asking 72 questions in all. All they need are yes or no answers, but it is not a test that Mr Clinton is likely to enjoy. Nor will he be asking for help from the First Lady.

The questions include this one, that cuts to the heart of the suit: "Please admit or deny the following: On May 8, 1991, at the Excelsior Hotel in Little Rock, Ark. Defendant Clinton exposed his penis to Paula Jones."

And there is this: "Please admit or deny the following: After May 8 1991, but while he was still



Governor of the State of Arkansas, in the Rotunda of the Arkansas State Capitol, Defendant Clinton touched Paula Jones and said, 'Don't we make a beautiful couple - beauty and the beast.'"

ing sexual favours for jobs on the state payroll. Mr Clinton, who says that he cannot even remember meeting Ms Jones let alone revealing any part of his anatomy to her, is not likely to engage in this particular game. His lawyers have the option of asking the judge in the case to block the questions.

With little prospect of the two sides agreeing to an out-of-court settlement, the case itself is due to go to trial in Little Rock next May. Mr Clinton's lead lawyer, Bob Bennett, has already voiced his disdain. "I am not surprised that they would use their pleadings to further try to embarrass the President by using rumours and hearsay and fictions," he said.

For Ms Jones, however, even lawyers are unrepentant, even though they have served notice that their own client's wider sex life should not be explored in the trial.

— David Osborne

## TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.13	Italy (lira)	2,704
Austria (schillings)	19.34	Japan (yen)	194.47
Belgium (francs)	56.81	Malta (lira)	0.61
Canada (\$)	2.18	Netherlands (guilders)	3.09
Cyprus (pounds)	0.81	Norway (kroner)	11.16
Denmark (kroner)	10.54	Portugal (escudos)	278.35
France (francs)	9.22	Spain (pesetas)	231.38
Germany (marks)	2.76	Sweden (kroner)	11.98
Greece (drachmas)	436.64	Switzerland (francs)	2.31
Hong Kong (\$)	12.15	Turkey (lira)	275,769
Ireland (puns)	1.07	USA (\$)	1.58

Source: Thomas Cook  
Rates for indication purposes only

## ZITS

by Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

7.30 FOR 8

by Chris Priestley



"COMPELLING...STEPHEN FRY AS FLAMBOYANT OSCAR WILDE IS IMPRESSIVE AND MOVING"

"A REVELATION"  
...Stephen Fry gives a dominating screen performance in this impressive and touching work of intelligence, compassion and tragic satire."  
Alexander Walker - EVENING STANDARD

"A WINNER FROM THE START"  
...brilliant acting by the entire cast, especially Stephen Fry who was born to be Wilde and Jennifer Ehle who breaks hearts as Oscar's wife, Constance."  
Miranda Levy - WOMAN'S JOURNAL

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## Insurance firm dropped black man's image from publicity

A top UK life insurer was yesterday accused of racial bias after replacing a black man's picture on a brochure cover with the image of a white woman. As *Nic Gatti* and *Tony Borsignore* report, the affair has rekindled the row over Ford's alleged "ethnic cleansing" of black faces from a car promotion guide.

The picture staring out of the original application form for an Axa Multipension Plan shows a serene, sober-looking man wearing a shirt and tie, the epitome of respectability. Just the right person for a personal pension – except his image was pulled from the brochure weeks after first being distributed up and down the country to financial advisers. He is black.

In his place, Axa Equity & Law chose to publish a picture of a sober-looking, serene young woman, wearing an open-necked shirt under a business jacket. She is white. Axa claimed yesterday that it wanted only to make the person on the front of the picture more up-market by having her wear a jacket.

But the sudden change of imagery made Tracey Dell, an independent financial adviser in Northampton, see red. She is complaining to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), alleging that the main reason why Axa chose to switch faces on its publication was because brokers selling the product had complained. "My information is that when the brochure went out to independent financial advisers, a handful complained that it would be far more difficult to sell the product if it had the picture of a black man on the front," Ms Dell said yesterday. "I think it was quite phenomenal to react to pressure in this way. I mean, if the majority of brokers in this country were asked whose picture they want on the front page of any brochure, the chances are that they would ask for Melinda Messenger. But no company would give in on that one."

The affair contains echoes of last year's Ford Motor Company furore, where five members of ethnic minorities were invited to appear in the picture to show the racial mix of Ford's workforce at Dagenham. But in an "ethnic-cleansed" version of the photograph, the black and brown faces were replaced by white ones. The company apologised and paid compensation to the five workers. However, an Axa spokesman yesterday said the decision to drop a black face from the company's sales aid was not racially motivated and was part of its aim to change all its product literature as part of a merger with another insurer, Sun Life.

He said: "The brief was changed in the two brochures to reflect a more respectable image in the second one. The woman is clearly wearing a respectable business suit while the man was in a shirt and tie." The spokesman added that the company had also made changes to a separate brochure promoting another of its products, altering the picture from a white woman wearing a sweater to a man wearing a tie.



Deep space: Spectators watch yesterday as the nuclear-powered Cassini space probe lifts off just before dawn at Cape Canaveral, Florida, bound for Saturn. The 2.2 billion-mile journey will take seven years. Photograph: Joe Skipper/Reuters

## Saudi victim's brother waives right to insist on death penalty

Neither of the British nurses accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia will face public beheading after the victim's brother waived his right to demand the death penalty. Steve Boggan says it took almost a year – and £770,000 – to reach this point.

Frank Gilford, the only man who could guarantee the lives of Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan, yesterday ended 10 months of speculation.

For Ms McLauchlan, 31, who has already been sentenced to eight years in prison and 500 lashes for involvement in the murder of Yvonne Gilford, his announcement was academic. But for Deborah Parry, who still awaits the verdict of a Saudi court, it came as

a huge relief. Both families expressed "delight" last night.

In return for giving up his right, Mr Gilford, who lives in Jamestown, South Australia, was paid 1.7m Australian dollars (£770,000), most of which will be spent on a new children's ward in his sister's name in Adelaide. The rest, he said, would go in legal fees, leaving \$50,000 for his own pain and suffering. It was not "blood money". It was "compensation". Dis-

gusted at his treatment at the hands of the British press, most of which regarded his negotiations with distaste, he banned representatives of UK-based media organisations from a press conference attended by his Australian lawyers.

"I have agreed to waive the death penalty in consideration of sources, other than the nurses and their families, providing 1.7 million Australian dollars (£770,000)," he said. "I would

like to make it clear I have not accepted any 'blood money' as that is a specified sum under Saudi Arabian law... [I] have accepted compensation which is an alternative to 'blood money' under Saudi Arabian law."

"From information that I have received I believe that the nurses are guilty of the murder of my sister but in the end I leave their guilt to the Saudi court to determine." Ms Gilford, 55, was found battered,

stabbed and suffocated in her room at the King Fahd Military Medical Centre in Dhahran last December. The Saudi authorities claim the women killed her during a row when she tried to end a lesbian relationship with Ms Parry, 38, something both nurses deny.

The Saudi court is now likely to hand down its verdict on Ms Parry. If its three judges decide she is guilty of "intentional murder", she would have been

eligible for the death penalty without Mr Gilford's waiver.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said work was going on behind the scenes to ensure that neither woman would be flogged. He told ITN: "I did say our objective was to see that neither nurse was beheaded or flogged. We are half-way there and let us hope we can go the extra distance."

A statement issued on behalf of the women's families

thanked all the lawyers involved and concluded: "We are pleased to note that the majority of the payment to Mr Gilford is to be used for charitable purposes as the girls have always found it difficult to appreciate the need under sharia law to compensate Mr Gilford and his family for a crime which they did not commit in order to avoid the possibility of the most terrible miscarriage of justice."

## Beards and beer bellies left in the past as real ale gurus come of age

The Campaign for Real Ale, arguably one of the most successful consumer campaigns, celebrates its 25th anniversary today. Stephen Goodwin toasts the occasion at the All Nations in Shropshire.

Walter "Watty" Colley, dropping in to get two pints of home-brewed pale ale poured into a large old whisky bottle, was unimpressed by the accolades heaped on the pub and the golden liquid he was carrying off.

Watty has been drinking All Nations pale ale for 54 years and he does not need a fancy guide book to tell him it is a cracking pint. "I'm not happy with the price, mind thee," added the 79-year-old former kiln-worker. A pint at the All Nations costs 95p.

None of the regulars is about to go overboard about their pub's inclusion in *Camra's* Silver Selection – the select few who have featured in all 25 *Good Beer Guides*.

Once characterised as a sort of mutual support group for men with beards and beer bellies, *Camra* has proved itself a strikingly successful consumer



Well served: The All Nations pub in Madeley, Shropshire, has made all 25 *Good Beer Guides*. Photograph: David Rose

campaigning organisation. Its object was to drive out "fizzy beer" – where carbon dioxide was used to force beer to the bar – and also "characterless keg" so that drinkers could once again enjoy traditionally brewed cask beer. Real ale was then the exception in pubs but by 1980 the epitome of fizzy beer, Watneys Red, had been axed and hand pumps sprouted on bars across the country.

There are now around 2,500 real ales and new breweries are opening at a rate of almost one a week. But not everything is rosy in the beer garden; characterless keg, employing nitrogen in its dispensing and

millions of pounds in its advertising, is still a *Camra* target. And then there is price. Today the average pint costs £1.64 and can rise to £2.15. In 1974 beer cost an average 15p a pint.

Madeley, in rural Shropshire, is a down-to-earth place. The All Nations and pubs close by once slaked the thirsts of those who stoked the furnaces and oiled the wheels of the first industrial revolution. The Eltish Hill works where Watty once fired the kilns is now part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum.

Keith Hardman, the landlord, was as unfazed as his regulars by the fame. Each year *Camra* sends him a stick-

er hailing the pub's inclusion in the guide but he has not bothered to put any of them in the window of the unprepossessing building.

"It's a pub, it's not a restaurant that sells beer or anything like that," Mr Hardman said.

The All Nations was built in 1789 on a bank high above the River Severn and it has stayed within two families all that time – Bagbays and Lewises. Mr Hardman married Jean Lewis, whose father, Bill, took over the pub in 1934. However, its survival is credited to her mother, Eliza.

Twenty-five years ago there were just four home-brewed pubs left in the country, two of which were in Shropshire, the All Nations and the Three Tuns at Bishops Cleece.

Eliza Lewis ladled the beer by hand – some 200 gallons per brew – from the coal-fired copper into the mash tun, back into the boiler and then into the fermenting vessel.

Pressed hard yesterday, Graham Wilson, a retired long-distance lorry driver, broke out of the undemonstrative cover and sang the praises of the pub, its pale ale and even its outside toilets. "It's what I was brought up with. You can get wet with a good pint inside, and you can get wet when you have to go outside."

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### INSIDE TODAY



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### IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

#### IS FRY AN OSCAR-WINNER?

Stephen Fry's Wilde film hits the screen at last. Adam Mars-Jones passes judgment

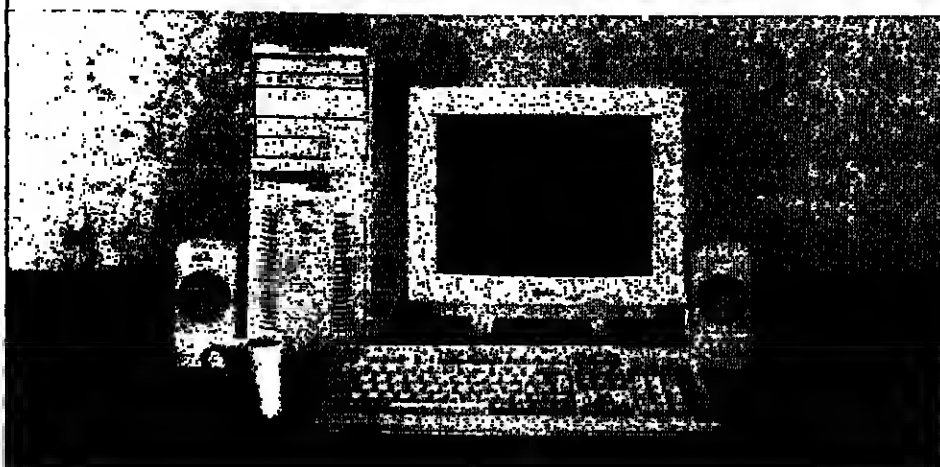
#### A FILM LESS ORDINARY?

We interview the wonderful people who gave us *Trainspotting*, back with Cameron Diaz



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## Westminster housing chief's homes sell-off fears

Former Westminster City Council housing chief, Graham England, described in the High Court yesterday his anxiety over the Tory majority group's controversial plan to sell off up to 500 council homes a year.

He conceded the late 1980s sell-off scheme - which has left him, Dame Shirley Porter and other council colleagues facing a £31m surcharge - was pitched "at a very high level" and he certainly would not have recommended it.

The ex-housing director told three judges he was concerned

that the district auditor would take the view that the council was fettering its ability to fulfil its statutory duties to house the homeless.

But he took advice from a leading lawyer, who said he was being "over-restrictive" and the city-wide policy was lawful.

Asked by Alun Jones QC, appearing for the auditor, if he thought that to designate 500 sales a year was "on the edge of perversity", he replied: "It was on the right side of the edge."

Mr England, ex-council leader Dame Shirley and three

other former Westminster colleagues are all asking the High Court to overturn the £31.6m surcharge imposed by district auditor John Magill after he said they were guilty of "disgraceful and improper gerrymandering" between 1987 and 1989.

In May last year he made them and one other council official "jointly and severally" liable to repay the sum he estimated to have been wrongly spent on allegedly trying to fix election results in eight marginal wards, by selling council homes cheaply under the

right-to-buy scheme to people who were more likely to vote Conservative.

Paul Haylor, the former divisional housing director, who also faces the surcharge, is ill and is not appearing.

Cross-examined by Mr Jones, Mr England recalled the uproar at City Hall as the Conservative majority group battled to introduce a designated sales policy. He told Lord Justice Rose, sitting with Mr Justice Latham and Mr Justice Keene, that at one housing committee meeting in April 1987, the police had to be

called and he had ended up "pinned against a glass window on the 19th floor of City Hall".

Mr England denied helping to throw a "smokescreen" round the policy in order to get it approved. He described his growing anxiety when it was originally proposed to target sales in eight key marginal wards and how he had warned against it. But the decision to target 500 homes a year across the city had been made on proper grounds and he was not guilty of wilful misconduct.

The hearing resumes today.

## Baby's injuries were inflicted, nanny trial told

The baby who died while being cared for by nanny Louise Woodward had been shaken with "quite enormous force", an expert on child abuse told her murder trial yesterday.

Dr Eli Newberger said nine-month-old Matthew Eappen had been subjected to a shaking so violent that it would have been carried out with as much energy as an adult could use.

It went on for up to and beyond a minute, probably in intervals, Dr Newberger told the Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Miss Woodward, 19, of Elton, near Chester, is on trial for first degree murder.

Dr Newberger, a key prosecution witness, who has written seven books on child abuse and heads the Child Protection Scheme and Boston's Children's Hospital, said that from the time he first saw the baby - the day after his admission to the hospital in February - he had been in "great to no doubt" that he was a child abuse victim, who had suffered "shaken baby syndrome".

"From the clinical record and my examination it was



Louise Woodward listens to a witness giving testimony during her murder trial yesterday. Photograph: Reuters

clear this was a child whose neurological system had suffered devastating injuries."

He said they could not have been caused by a gentle shaking, the baby being tossed on a bed or being dropped on a towel covering a bathroom floor, as Miss Woodward is alleged to have told police.

Asked by prosecuting attorney Gerry Leone whether the injuries were accidental or

inflicted, Dr Newberger replied: "They were inflicted."

Dr Newberger said: "This shaking was of such a violent degree that it would have required as much energy as an adult could muster, sustained over a period of time approaching or exceeding a minute, probably delivered in intervals. This child's clinical condition indicated his brain and eyes had been subjected

to quite enormous direct force."

He said the injuries were at the "far end of the spectrum of severity" of about 20 cases of Shaken Baby Syndrome he saw each year. He was not surprised there were no external injuries found on the baby on his admission to hospital. "This is typical in these cases."

"My opinion is that all the injuries are attributable to

child abuse," he told the court.

The doctor gave a graphic demonstration of the degree of force he said would have been necessary to cause the massive injuries. He shook his hands violently in front of him, raised them above his head and slammed them down towards the floor as he said how the baby would have been grasped firmly and shaken for a number of seconds with the greatest possible force before being slammed to the floor, causing a skull fracture to the back of his head.

The prosecution alleges that Miss Woodward killed the baby in a rage of frustration and bitterness because he was crying all day and she was unhappy with her job.

The defence claims the injury could have been caused accidentally, some days before, and that the brain injuries developed as it started to bleed again. The case continues.

## Unpaid crew force ship to Plymouth

A giant car-carrier was stranded last night outside Plymouth harbour after the crew mutinied and took over the vessel protesting about unpaid wages.

The *O'Shea Express* was on route from Bremerhaven in Germany to Lebanon when the 11 Lebanese crew members revolted over their unpaid wages, reported to be worth nearly \$26,000.

The angry crew forced the Polish master to change course to Plymouth late on Tuesday. Under maritime law, the British port can act as neutral waters in which to settle the dispute.

Mark Clark, a spokesman for the British Coastguard in Plymouth, said: "According to information received by us, the carrier was taken over by the crew in protest about unpaid wages. The Maritime Safety Agency will be making a visit to check safety conditions."

WD Tamlyn, the Plymouth-based agents for the company, said yesterday: "The owners' representatives are on board to try and resolve the situation."

When asked why the crew's wages had not been paid, the spokesman said: "These things can happen. Paying conditions go wrong, or the owners keep the funds in the bank to get the interest." — Louise Hancock

## Jail conditions dreadful, says chief inspector

The prisons inspector warns that conditions in some jails are as bad as a century ago, and as numbers of inmates rise, standards are falling, reports Jason Bennett, Crime Correspondent.

The Chief Inspector of Prisons has launched an outspoken attack on conditions in jails which he says are collapsing because of pressure from overcrowding and lack of funding.

Sir David Ramsbotham has recommended Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to carry out an "urgent examination" of the entire prison system. He said some of the conditions were what he would expect in jails in the last century and that standards were dropping below the minimum promised by the Prison Service.

He said: "I must voice my concern that, to continue to cut resources while the prison population climbs inexorably higher, is in danger of becoming a process of *reductio ad absurdum* [reducing it to a farce]."

The sweeping criticisms of the system are some of the most outspoken comments yet made by Sir David, who is the country's most senior inspector of prisons.

The comments follow a report published yesterday following an unannounced visit in March to Lincoln adult prison for convicted adults and people on remand.

He said that staff on the wing for 200 unconvicted prisoners awaiting trial were

"clearly demoralised and no longer believed that they were in control of the landings".

The centre were inmates spent their first night was in a "dreadful state", with ripped and stained mattresses, and crusted food on the walls and ceilings. Sir David commented: "You begin to wonder in which country, and in what century, what is described is being allowed to take place. When you realise that it is England in 1997 you feel angry that this is being tolerated."

He said prison managers "must feel extremely concerned about the future, in many other prisons, as numbers continue to rise."

The prison population in England and Wales has continued to go up again and currently stands at a record 63,000. The Government made an emergency payment of £44m earlier this year to help cope with overcrowding.

A Prison Service spokesman said: "There has been an awful lot of improvements in the past five years, such as the ending of slopping out and expansion of workshops. Staff have been incredible in the way they have dealt with the problems."

In response to the criticism of Lincoln, Richard Tilt, director general of the Prison Service, said: "We accept that this is a critical report identifying some real problems in an elderly local prison facing severe population pressures within a tight budget. However, many of the problems identified in the report have been tackled."

## Tories drop Saatchi

The Conservative Party aired a party political broadcast last night without the involvement of the Saatchi brothers for the first time in 15 years. The advertising industry believes the Tories have dropped the M&C Saatchi advertising agency permanently. The broadcast, which was made by the man who designed William Hague's leadership campaign platform, shows the Conservative leader talking to people about Tory values. It included shots of Mr Hague wearing his infamous baseball cap.

## Rail inquiry chief quits

The man leading the inquiry into last month's train crash in Southall, west London, in which seven people died, has resigned over a possible conflict of interest, the Health and Safety Executive announced last night.

The HSE said it was possible that Dr Tony Barrell's position as a non-executive director of BAA plc, which is jointly constructing the Heathrow Express along the same stretch of line in west London, could be thought to compromise his appointment to head the inquiry.

— Rondeep Ramesh

## Staff made series of errors over psychiatric patient who killed

Hospital staff and social workers made a series of errors over the treatment of a psychiatric patient who battered her father to death on a home visit, an inquiry has found.

Sarah Beynon, a 22-year-old insurance clerk, had been allowed out of a secure clinic in Bristol where she was being treated for schizophrenia when she carried out the killing with a hammer.

She pleaded guilty to manslaughter due to diminished responsibility at Bristol Crown Court in May last year. The court heard how she attacked her father Colin in the

garden of the family home and battered him to death with a mallet and a hammer taken from his toolbox. She is now detained indefinitely in Broadmoor.

The inquiry, published yesterday, shows that the string of errors began soon after Miss Beynon was first admitted to the mental health unit of Southmead Hospital, Bristol, in August 1994.

The report describes how her medication was poorly monitored; she was not screened for drug abuse despite admitting to taking ecstasy; there was a lack of communi-

cation between social workers; and the risk she posed was not formally assessed.

She was given leave from Southmead despite her mental state and the report revealed that her unauthorised absences sometimes took place with her father's collusion.

Many risks were taken, without calculation. It said: "[Miss Beynon] behaved repeatedly in a way which created a risk of serious harm both to herself and others."

In January 1995, Miss Beynon was moved to the acute ward at Fromeside secure unit in Bristol where she was often

the only woman among 15 men, despite staff being "well aware of the tensions and difficulties" this produced.

The report, whose chairman was Professor Bridgit Diamond, said: "Up until early June 1995, the clinical team were well aware of [Miss Beynon's] dangerousness, however, from July [she] largely controlled her contact with staff at Fromeside and other mental health workers."

The inquiry said the killing "could probably not have been avoided" although the risk "might have been reduced".

Ann Lloyd of the Healthcare

Trust which runs Fromeside Clinic said: "It was a desperately tragic event and we would like to place on record our sincere regrets to Sarah's family. We acknowledge the shortcomings highlighted in this report."

In a statement, Jenny Beynon, Sarah's mother, said: "While I welcome Professor Diamond's report, I sincerely hope it will not be left to gather dust, but will be implemented quickly and effectively and that adequate resources are made available to do so."

— Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent

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Cold comfort: The commonest way of catching a cold from an infected person is to shake their hand and later rub your eyes, health experts say

## Common colds that begin on the hands

If you should meet a consultant chest physician and snuffle in his presence, he will be unlikely to greet you with a handshake. It is not coughs and sneezes that spread diseases but hands.

The commonest way of catching a cold from an infected person is by shaking hands with them and later rubbing your eyes. This is a more reliable way of transmitting the virus than breathing near them or even kissing them.

A guide to facts and fiction about colds and flu was published yesterday by the Consumer Health Information Centre, set up to improve understanding of common ailments by the Proprietary Association of Great Britain which represents pharmacists.

Advised by doctors, nurses and patients' representatives, the centre launched a campaign to beat the bugs that cause the loss of 150 million working days a year.

The guide dismisses the widely held belief that sitting in a draught or getting caught in the rain can bring on a cold. However, working in a modern, air-conditioned building where there are no natural draughts may increase the risk. Studies of US servicemen living in old, draughty huts had only half as many colds as their counterparts in new quarters.

The average cold lasts from four to 14 days - longer if your body was at a low ebb when it started. Antibiotics are useless because they act only

against bacteria and colds are caused by viruses.

The tradition of feeding chicken soup to cold sufferers, which dates back to the 13th century, has no scientific foundation beyond the comforting effects of the warm drink. In 1978 a doctor in Florida tested the soup's effects and found it let patients breathe more easily. "The improvements, however, did not last for long. Any scolding hot drink probably has similar effects," the guide says.

A survey showed eight out of 10 people agreed it was important to treat themselves when they got a cold or flu, but 60 per cent said they had seen a family doctor over a minor problem in the last year. The centre's helpline, staffed by

pharmacists, is 0845 6061611.

Hospitals in Worcestershire and Oxfordshire have postponed operations because of a shortage of blood, the Midlands region of the National

Blood Service said yesterday. A spokeswoman for the service said supplies of the commonest group O blood had been halved.

— Jeremy Laurence

## Bacteria proving resistant to drugs

Illnesses caused by bacteria resistant to antibiotics are growing around the world and are spreading beyond hospitals into the community, *Jeremy Laurence*, Health Editor, reports on how the over-use of medicines has irretrievably altered the microbiological environment.

Public health experts are becoming increasingly alarmed at the threat to world health from the emergence of new strains of bacteria that cannot be destroyed by antibiotics.

Fears have been fuelled by the discovery of a bug in Japan last May and in the US in July resistant to the antibiotic, vancomycin, which is normally the last line of defence against it. The bug was an unusual strain of the *MRSA* bacterium (methicillin-resistant *staphylococcus aureus*) which is a common cause of hospital infections in Britain.

An international confer-

ence organised by the Government Public Health Laboratory Service in London yesterday considered measures to stem the rise in resistant strains. Professor Brian Duerden, deputy director of the service, said the seemingly uncontrolled increase in resistance presented a major challenge to medical practice and to the community at large.

"There have been some vancomycin resistant enterococci [bacteria] in some hospitals in London that are almost untreatable. It is very worrying," he said, adding that it was not just a hospital problem but was now being seen in the community. "MRSA-infected patients are discharged from hospital with increasing speed and then transferred repeatedly between community facilities such as nursing homes and day care centres."

One bug which first emerged in Spain, where antibiotics can be bought over the counter and are used in huge quantities, caused an outbreak of infection among children in Iceland and was later transferred to the US. The bug, a strain of *pneumococcus* resistant to penicillin which causes

pneumonia, ear infections, a type of meningitis and the blood infection, septicemia, now accounts for a quarter of all resistant strains of *pneumococcus* identified in the US.

Professor Duerden said: "People move and their organisms move with them. With the growth in travel it only needs one rare event on the other side of the world and it becomes an international problem."

Scientists had been warning about the growing problem for 20 years and governments were finally taking notice. In Britain, parliamentary committees are examining the issue and the Chief Medical Officer was also involved. "It has come to the top of the agenda," he said.

It was no good waiting for drug companies to develop new antibiotics. The last new group, the fluoroquinolones, were introduced 20 years ago and there were no new agents ready to be introduced.

"It is a biological problem. There are limited targets in the bacterial cell that you can aim drugs at. There are a lot of agents that will kill the cell but they will also kill us. The task is to find one that is fatal to the bacterium but not to us."

## Threat to dental care

A change in regulations governing dentists could result in any patient who has not attended within the last 15 months being dropped from the NHS list.

The British Dental Association said the change, introduced in September last year, threatened to deprive up millions of patients of an NHS dentist. The associa-

tion - which claims up to 5 million patients could be de-registered without their knowledge - is calling for the restoration of the registration period to 24 months. Dentists are paid £5 a year for every patient on their register to ensure continuity of care. The BDA agreed a reduction in the registration period from 24 to 15 months

with the Government last year in order to raise £20m for improvements in children's dentistry. However, the association now says that other changes have yielded savings of £50m and the reduction is no longer required. Figures show that on average patients visit the dentist once every 19 months.

— Jeremy Laurence



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## Tories may risk snap poll in Merchant's hot seat

Party organisers are gearing up for a spate of by-elections in the next few weeks. A death, a resignation and a court decision have left voters in three areas wondering who their future MP will be. *Fran Abrams weighs up the odds.*

Beckenham Conservatives met the party chairman, Lord Parkinson, last night to discuss the resignation of their MP Piers Merchant, sparking rumours that a replacement could be elected before Christmas.

Although no-one would disclose the meeting, party sources suggested Central Office was keen to call a by-election as soon as possible. Mr Merchant resigned on Tuesday after renewed allegations of an affair with an 18-year-old researcher. The local party association's executive will meet tomorrow to decide its next move.

However, some sources said the Beckenham by-election could be held on 27 November, coinciding with the most likely date for the by-election which must be held in Winchester.

Winchester's new Liberal Democrat MP, Mark Oaten, must defend his seat against its former Conservative incumbent, Gerry Malone, after a court decided that his two-vote victory in May was invalid. Although the election is bound to be close-run, the Liberal Democrats seem relatively confident. As a sitting member Mr Oaten is bound to have gained status and local recognition.

The Paisley by-election,

caused by the suicide of the Labour MP Gordon McMaster, will be held on 6 November. Labour sources confirmed last night that the date would be announced this week in the *London Gazette*, the official channel for the writ to be moved while Parliament is not sitting.

Labour's Paisley candidate will be Douglas Alexander, 30, a former speechwriter for Gordon Brown and the late Labour leader John Smith.

The Tories have selected a local florist, Sheila Laidlaw, 58, to fight the seat, but the real contest will be between Labour and the Scottish National Party candidate, Ian Blackford, 36, a financial analyst.

Mr McMaster regained Paisley South with 21,482 votes at the general election to the SNP's 8,732. The Liberal Democrats had 3,500 and the Conservatives 3,200. Despite the safe nature of the seat, Labour is bound to fear that scandals surrounding the former MP's death could damage its vote. Paul Mack, a controversial councillor accused of spreading rumours about him, is to stand independently.

There were no immediate takers for the Beckenham seat last night, although more than 300 applicants are expected. Former ministers who lost their seats in May were thought to be weighing up the idea, though Chris Patten is said to be busy writing a book and Malcolm Rifkind is said to want a Scottish seat.

Yesterday Michael Portillo again appeared to rule himself out - his friends had said it was too soon - though some cynics said he might allow himself to be persuaded to stand.



New terms: A Commons committee was told yesterday that easing accounting rules on student loans could free up to £1bn a year to help relieve the cash crisis in higher education. Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

## Fix can put £1bn into education

The Government should relax strict accounting rules affecting student loans to free up £1 billion a year to ease the higher education funding crisis, a former senior Treasury official said yesterday.

Dr Bill Robinson, special adviser to the Chancellor from 1991-93, said ministers could safely change rules which mean student loans are treated by the Treasury as if they will never be paid back. The adjustment would remove loans from public spending, allowing the Government to put more money into higher education and stay within its spending limits.

Arguments over changes to public accounting rules were being heard yesterday by the Commons education and employment select committee as part of its inquiry into higher education funding. The inquiry follows the publication last July of the Dearing Report, and the decision to introduce means-tested tuition fees next September.

Senior economists have told the committee that continuing to classify student lending as spending means there will effectively be no benefit from raising student contributions to higher education until around 2007, when the first fee-payers are repaying their loans. However, ministers fear a relaxation in the rules could cause alarm in the City over public spending.

—Lucy Ward, Education Correspondent

## Threat to end child benefit for over-16s lifted

Gordon Brown's proposal to abolish child benefit for the over-16s is at risk, according to Whitehall sources. Anthony Bevins, Political Editor, reports on a pledge which appears to have vanished without trace.

The threat to child benefit received by mothers with children aged 16 to 18 in full-time education - dubbed Labour's "Teenage Tax" by the Tories - has been lifted.

Parents of children in full-time education continue to receive the benefit, of £11.05 for the first child and £9 for subsequent children, up to their 19th birthday. It is not available for over-16s in training.

Abolition of the benefit was first floated by Mr Brown, when he was shadow Chancellor in April last year, when it was said that more than a million families could be affected,

with an annual saving to the Exchequer of £700m. The plan was to redirect the cash to help low and middle-income families with children in education or training, penalising parents like those with children in the sixth-form at Eton.

Tony Blair subsequently supported a review, when he said: "It makes absolute sense to look hard at all the sources of money in this area, and to review the present system and see whether it's fair, whether it's efficient, whether the money could not be better used in extending opportunity for people currently denied it."

But *The Independent* has been told that the Labour leader wanted a review as a device to kick an unpopular idea into touch - a means of dropping it, without embarrassing Mr Brown.

The Labour election manifesto said: "We are committed to retain universal child benefit where it is universal today - from birth to age 16 - and to uprate it at least in line with prices." But it then added: "We are reviewing educational finance and maintenance for those older than 16 to ensure higher staying-on rates at school and college, and that re-

sources are used to support those most in need. This review will continue in government."

Whitehall sources have said that an inter-departmental review, led by the Department for Education and Employment, has been at work for some months. The Chancellor said in his Budget speech, on 2 July, that the review would be completed "to ensure that resources are used to support those most in need".

But two sources from different departments have said that the review has "run into the ground".

Implementation of Mr

Brown's idea was said not to have the support of Cabinet colleagues; it was said to be much too complicated to implement; and would not generate sufficient savings from the better-off to make it worthwhile.

A spokeswoman for the DfEE confirmed that a review was taking place, but she was unable to offer any published reference to it by any of her department's ministers.

The Commons library said that it had nothing on its parliamentary database to show that any minister in any other department had said anything about the proposal since May.

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## Anatomy of a sting: how an MP was trapped

Conservative MP Piers Merchant was the latest victim of tabloid newspaper investigations into sleaze.

Kim Sengupta looks at the newspaper operation behind his fall, and examines the questions it raises about privacy and the press.

The flat was in York, the room had "traditional" oak beams and a "huge" double bed. Lying "provocatively" on this bed was a crotchless, fake-leopard-skin body suit. Anna Cox held it up to Piers Merchant and his friend and former researcher Anthony Gilberthorpe, and murmured "Only Piers is going to see me in this, and he will have to wait". All this and much, much more was being video-taped, and lies locked away in the offices of the *Sunday Mirror*.

On Tuesday, Mr Merchant, the MP for Beckenham, resigned, just 24 hours after after threatening legal action against the *Sunday Mirror*, and posing for a photo opportunity with his wife Helen and his mistress, Anna Cox, an 18-year-old former nightclub hostess. He had discovered the sheer extent of the evidence of adultery the newspaper had gathered against him.

Since the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and the questioning of media tactics that followed, this was the first major tabloid excursion in exposing the alleged sexual transgressions of a public figure.

The Press Complaints Commission had promised a clampdown on intrusions into privacy. But Mr Merchant has not, as yet, complained. If he did, the newspaper's defence will be public interest. The MP, they could say, has consistently lied about his relationship with Ms Cox and hypocritically used the issue to castigate the press.

The most potent evidence in the newspaper's armoury is the one which could in fact lead to the most concern about the methods used in a newspaper investigation - the video and audio tapes which allegedly prove Mr Merchant was much more than just a good friend of Ms Cox, as he had claimed to the public and his constituency.

Apart from the sexual aspect, the tapes also apparently recorded Mr Merchant making Heil Hitler salutes about Mr Gilberthorpe becoming the owner and boss of an antique centre below his flat, and making remarks about senior Tories.

How did the *Sunday Mirror* get this? It was arranged

through Anthony Gilberthorpe, and filmed at his York home, the apparatus being set up by a surveillance expert.

It is understood that Mr Gilberthorpe, who had worked for Mr Merchant in the mid 80s when he was MP for Newcastle Central and subsequently kept in touch, took the story to the *Sunday Mirror* at the end of last week. A figure of around £25,000 was negotiated. Mr Gilberthorpe has not been available for comment since.

It was also Mr Gilberthorpe who supplied other details of the trip, such as how Ms Cox, on her way to York, visited the National Council for Cosmetic Surgery in Birmingham for a post-operative check-up on implants which had enlarged her breasts.

The *Sunday Mirror's* informant had told them that Mr Merchant, 46, who has two children, was taking Ms Cox to the Tory conference in Blackpool. While there, he would be attending a fringe meeting about press and privacy, and take the opportunity to make a strong attack on tabloid newspapers from the point of view of an "innocent victim".

His "victimisation" had come just before the election. Then, the self-same Ms Cox had gone to the *Sun* through the offices of agent Max Clifford claiming she was having a relationship with Mr Merchant. Ms Cox claimed she had been "used" as Mr Merchant's "plaything" - however, she was paid about £20,000 by the *Sun*. After the election, the couple got back together again.

The *Sunday Mirror*, part of the Mirror Group which owns shares in *The Independent*, had no qualms about covering the story. Mr Merchant was a hypocrite who needed to be exposed. At Blackpool he said: "The tabloids... distort reality... often of course the story is completely fictional".

A team of four reporters and two photographers were dispatched to track Mr Merchant and Ms Cox. They compiled a portfolio of photos, 12 of which were to be used, in a six-page spread. To back it all up, there were the tapes whirling away.

Mr Merchant and Ms Cox were finally confronted on a train journey to London. He apparently wanted to know just how much the paper "had" on him. He then called his wife on his mobile phone, and left.

After the *Sunday Mirror* story appeared, a statement issued in the name of Mr Merchant, his wife Helen, and Ms Cox spoke of "scurrilous allegations", and insisted "Anna and Piers are not having an affair", and that Anna was a "family friend". Within 48 hours, the MP had resigned.



Before the fall: Piers Merchant, left, with his wife before the general election. He denied - and still denies - having an affair with Anna Cox, right, who he and his family insist is just a 'friend'

Photographs: PA  
Andrew Buurman

Guess  
who's been showered  
with £100 million of  
savings?

## MPs set to close door on Hamilton

Neil Hamilton is unlikely to be called to give more evidence to the Commons select committee on standards and privileges after making spectacular allegations to clear his name.

The disgraced former minister yesterday repeated warnings that he would "name names" if he was given the chance to give more evidence to the select committee.

But there was little enthusiasm among the cross-party committee for giving Mr Hamilton another platform to make further allegations under parliamentary privilege. "He could say what he likes outside the Commons," said one source. "That is up to him."

The reluctance to call Mr Hamilton to give further evidence will be seen as a signal that the committee will seek to bring the inquiry into his conduct to a swift conclusion when it meets again in a fortnight.

The committee is expected to discuss the possibility of calling Mohamed Al Fayed,

the owner of Harrods, who was accused by Mr Hamilton of ordering a break-in into the private safe-deposit box of Tiny Rowland, his rival in the battle to take over the store.

The committee was impressed by his skill as a barrister, but there are doubts that there was anything substantive and new in Mr Hamilton's evidence which could shake the damning conclusion of Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, that the evidence that he had accepted cash for questions was "compelling".

Mr Hamilton, who admits failing to register a stay at the Ritz, Paris, at Mr Fayed's expense, yesterday said he did plan to name other MPs who had infringed Commons rules.

"I am saying that Sir Gordon is retrospectively changing the rules. I will name those people, but not to say they have acted disgracefully."

— Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

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"All you need is love" ran the opening refrain at Stella McCartney's soundtrack for her first collection for the house of Chloé yesterday in Paris. She has the name and the fame already. Now, all she really needs is the design reputation to live up to it all.

The collection was just as we expected: clothes for people like Stella. Lace dresses, cleavages, masculine tailoring and a lot of saucy cheek. It was the most relevant Chloé has been to fashionable young women for many a season.

McCartney's parents, Linda and Paul, watched as her collection was presented at the Opera Garnier. Linda, to whom the collection was dedicated, said: "I loved it all. I wanted every outfit."

At Alexander McQueen's second ready-to-wear collection for GivENCHY, it was the dream team of Katy England and McQueen at their glorious best. The theme was country and western as Tammy Wynette and Dolly Parton have never seen it before.

GivENCHY did well to renew McQueen's contract for another three to five years. His tailoring – seen with crystal sequin trouser suits, bustier dresses and his signature all-in-one trouser suit – reigned supreme. Although the styling was pure Eighties cowgirl, you won't have to look like a rancher to wear the clothes when they hit the stores next spring.

— Tarrsin Blanchard



Persistent child offenders as young as 12 can be locked up by courts while waiting for their cases to be heard, under measures revealed yesterday by the Home Office.

The move to give magistrates greater powers to detain young people on remand follows of cases involving youths, such as the so-called "rat boy", who have committed dozens of crimes with impunity.

Solicitors, probation officers, and the police could also face fines for failing to meet the new time limits for dealing with young offenders in court.

The package of measures, disclosed by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, seeks to speed up youth justice and to nip in the bud offending among the very young before they become serious criminals.

One area of concern is the courts and police inability to deal with criminals aged under 15. At present only social service directors can have offenders placed in secure local authority accommodation while they await their case in the youth court.

**The forthcoming Crime and Disorder**

Bill will contain provisions to allow magistrates to lock up persistent offenders — defined as anyone who has been convicted on three occasions and faces a fourth charge within three years of the last offence — until the case is dealt with.

This provision is only expected to affect a small number of youngsters, but an extra 170 places have been made available to increase the number of places in secure accommodation in England and Wales to 400.

Vulnerable teenagers aged 15 and 16, some of whom are currently held on remand in jails, will also be kept in the local authority units in future. However, Labour's plans to ensure that no 15- and 16-year-olds on remand are kept in prison or young offenders' institutions appear to have been shelved because of cost.

The Home Secretary was also announcing a "fast track" system to deal with persistent young offenders.

Time limits to reduce delays for all young offenders are to be introduced. Courts will be expected to halve the current average of four and a half months for a young person who commits an offence to be sentenced. Anyone who fails to meet the set time limits will face fines, the rate of which has yet to be decided. This system could be extended to adult courts.

But the proposals drew fire from probation officers who argued that many of the current delays were due to underfunding.

Books will remain at the heart of the nation's libraries despite a huge campaign to connect the entire system to the Internet by 2002, said Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

"Development of new technology will complement but not replace the traditional role of libraries. Giving everyone access to information technology is probably the single most important issue facing public libraries today," he said at the launch of a report, *New Library: The People's Network*, from the Library and Information Commission.

The report, advocates spending £570m computerising Britain's libraries.

The parents of nine-month-old Hanna Silcott, born with a hole in her heart, were told by James Wisheart that she had an 80 per cent chance of surviving surgery. She died on his operating table. Afterwards, he allegedly said it had been "one of the best jobs I have ever done".

Hanna's mother, Lisa Silcott, 27, of Brixton, Ham, Devon, told the GMC's professional conduct committee that she and her husband, Andrew, had assumed that they were "the unlucky one in five".

But the disciplinary hearing, regarded as the most important medical inquiry of the decade, has been told that by the time of the operation in August 1994, eight of Mr Wisheart's 14 infant patients had already died during or after similar surgery.

Mr Wisheart, together with his fellow surgeon, Janardan Dhasmana, and Dr John Roylance, former chief executive of the Bristol United Healthcare NHS Trust,

all deny charges of serious professional misconduct. The charges relate to two types of complex surgery to correct congenital heart defects performed on babies at Bialto Royal Infirmary between 1988 and 1995.

Mrs Silcox told the hearing that after Hanna's operation she and her husband wrote to Mr Wisheart, who has since retired, to thank him for his work. He wrote back to say how sorry he was about her death.

Had she known about the surgeon's track record, Mrs Silcox said, she would have approached a different hospital. "If they had said the risk was as high, I would not have gone ahead with the surgery," she said.

Sandy Rundle, whose 10-month-old son, Matthew, died after a similar operation performed by Mr Wisheart in July 1994, said that he had told her that the chances of survival were 90 per cent. Mrs Rundle, 31, of Tintagel, Cornwall, said: "Mr Wisheart drew a diagram of the operation and said it needed to be done sooner rather than later. He said it was a straightforward procedure. I thought if Matthew had the operation, everything would be OK."

After the surgery, Mrs Rundle said, Mr Wisheart said it had gone "relatively well". However, Matthew, who also had Down's syndrome, died 10 days later.

The GMC committee is to hear evidence about operations on 53 babies, of whom 29 died and four suffered serious brain damage.

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## Free rail tickets for strike-hit travellers

Reclaiming fares for a late or delayed train service has always been difficult. Now the railway franchising director wants to change the rules. Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent, on compensating travellers.

Industry sources say that the shake-up was precipitated by Connex South Central, a key London commuter service. It refused to pay compensation to travellers under its passengers' charter after cancelling hundreds of trains a day. Experts had suggested this could have cost the company £2.5m.

Connex, instead, argued that industrial action by drivers caused it to implement an "emergency" timetable. Rail passengers hit by industrial action in June - which saw nearly 30 per cent of scheduled services cut - will be given three days of free travel as compensation. Analysts say this would cost Connex only £300,000.

The franchising director,

John O'Brien, who oversees the privatised rail companies, claimed that the offer of three days' free travel was "reasonable". He added: "Many passengers did not receive an acceptable level of service during the summer and were therefore entitled to receive some form of compensation."

However Mr O'Brien's office has recognised that many travellers using the line will not be compensated for the cancellations. At present, passengers on InterCity services can claim a percentage for late-running or cancelled trains. Great Western, which runs services from London to Bristol, offers up to 40 per cent of a ticket price for trains more than an hour late.

Mr O'Brien is aware that thousands of travellers with weekly tickets or daily returns will be left uncompensated by Connex. This would change under proposals under consideration by his officials.

The Connex deal affects more than 15,000 season ticket holders on Connex South Central's south London line, where an 11-day strike by train drivers led to the cancellation of more than 200 trains a day. Officials said they had taken

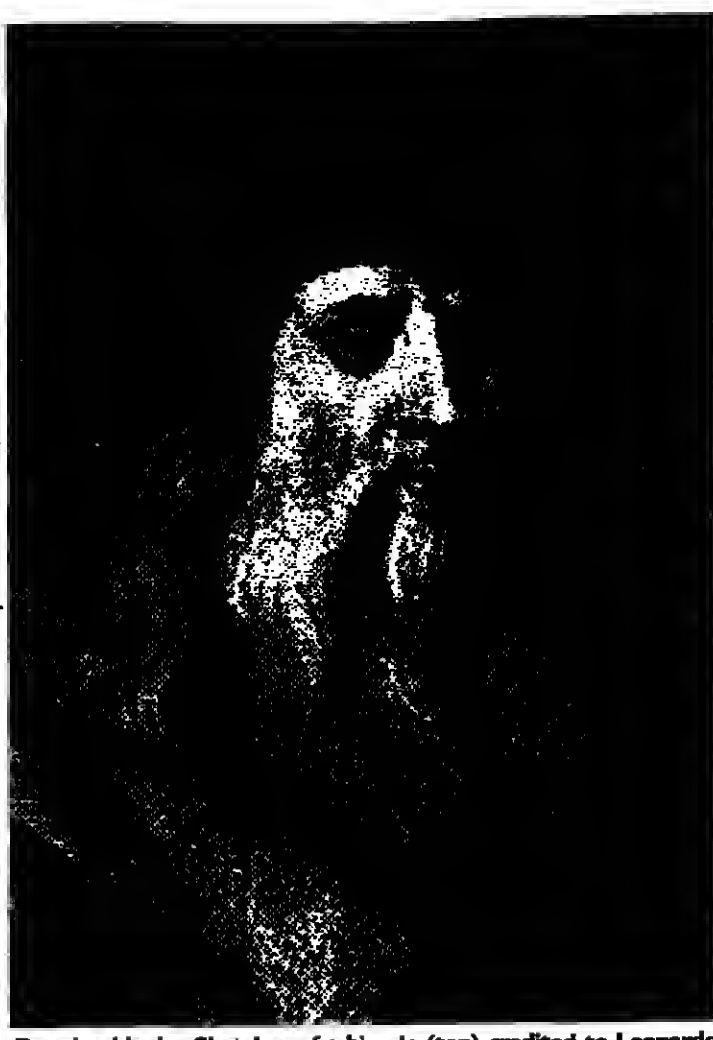
en a hard line. "This has set the precedent for future disruption. Operators have to give season ticket holders extra days for the disruption they face."

Under the privatisation performance regime, the franchising director - who split up and sold off British Rail to the private sector - did actually pay Connex a £32,000 "punctuality bonus" for the trains the company did run.

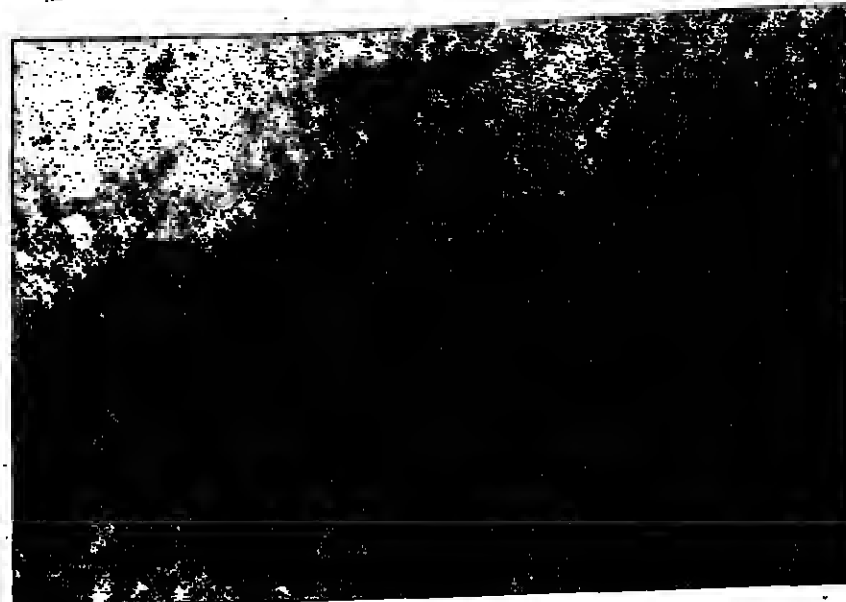
Rail pressure groups also highlighted that the franchising director had allowed Connex South Central to raise its fares by up to 5.3 per cent next year. "What the franchising director is giving with one hand he is taking with another. Passengers can get a few extra days' travel, but they are also facing above-inflation fare rises."

Rufus Barnes, secretary of the London Rail Users' Consultative Committee, said that Connex had said passengers were unlikely to get any compensation under the passengers' charter if their performance improved over the year. "Inner London services suffered a great deal. We think that three days free travel for season ticket holders is fair," he added.

## Italians forced to back-pedal on bicycle claims



Drawing blanks: Sketches of a bicycle (top) credited to Leonardo da Vinci may have been done by a monk in the 1600s. Photograph: PA



It has not been a good week for Italy. A nation still in shock from the toppling of its once all-powerful football team by England and the tremors of a succession of earthquakes in Umbria was rocked again yesterday as cracks appeared in another symbol of its national pride.

Italy's claims to have discovered the bicycle, through the inventive genius of Leonardo da Vinci, were yesterday looking decidedly shaky after further examination of his Renaissance manuscripts.

In 1974, when the papers were discovered, experts concluded that though the bicycle drawing did not come from da Vinci's own hand, it was a pupil's rough reproduction of a lost original by the master. But a German historian, Hans-Erhard

Lessing, has investigated the manuscripts and claims that the bicycle diagram was tampered with as recently as the 1600s.

He told *New Scientist* magazine: "No one questioned it. The Italians were ecstatic to have invented the bicycle."

Mr Lessing tracked down an art historian, Carlo Pedretti, from the University of California at Los Angeles, who examined the folded pages before they were restored by Italian monks in the 1960s. He held the papers up to a strong light yet saw no sign of a bicycle.

Instead, his notebook recorded two circles with curved lines through them where the cycle now appears. Mr Pedretti said: "What I saw was not a bicycle."

— Ian Burrell

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## British team take Thrust through the speed record

They have been dogged by bad weather and technical problems but yesterday the British Thrust team finally broke the supersonic land speed record, as Kate Watson-Smyth describes.

The RAF pilot Andy Green, streaked across the Nevada desert for the fourth time yesterday afternoon and straight into the record books.

Thrust roared over the desert track on its first run at 759.333mph (1,214.933kph) or 1.5 per cent above the speed of sound, according to the official timekeepers from the United States Automobile Club.

Some 55 minutes later, it sped back down the track, reaching a speed of

766.609mph (1,226.574kph) or 2 per cent above the speed of sound for an average two-way speed of 763.035mph (1,220.856kph).

Under international rules both runs must be made within one hour for the attempt to qualify but earlier in the week, when Mr Green broke the sound barrier twice, it took 61 minutes for engineers to prepare Thrust for the second run and the attempt did not count.

The team considered trying again on Tuesday, the 50th anniversary of Chuck Yeager's flight through the sound barrier in a rocket-powered plane, but opted for the more favourable conditions of early morning in the desert.

Richard Noble, the team leader, said Thrust's engines are more efficient and the speed of sound is lower when temperatures are cooler and the humidity is higher.

"It's a very complex equation," Mr Noble said. "The speed of sound comes down relative to the ground speed. By running early in the morning, we get more power from our engines. The car doesn't have to go so fast."

Mach 1 varies between about 750mph and 765mph (1,200-1,230kph), depending on the weather.

Mr Noble, 51, held the land speed record himself, set here on 4 October 1983, at 633.46mph (1,019.4kph), until Mr Green, 35, broke his mark on 25 September with a two-way average speed of 714.144mph (1,149.3kph), making him the first person to break the sound barrier on land.

Mr Green's fastest run so far was on Monday, when he pushed Thrust to 764.168mph, calculated at 1.007 times the speed of sound, or Mach 1.

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## Briton shares Nobel prize for his work on ageing

A Briton was among those who won the Nobel Chemistry prize awarded yesterday, while the Physics prize went to a group whose work on methods to cool and trap atoms with laser light could lead to the design of more precise atomic clocks, crucial for accurate satellite navigation. Margaret Rogerson reports.



John Walker: Research aids study of Alzheimer's disease

The Royal Academy of Sciences in Stockholm took the unusual step of splitting the Chemistry award. Half went to Jens Skou from Denmark, and the remainder was split between John Walker and Paul Boyer from Britain and the United States respectively.

Mr Boyer has been professor emeritus at the University of California since 1990 and Mr Walker has been a senior scientist at the Medical Research Council Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge since 1982. Mr Boyer and Mr Walker received the award for their work on how the enzyme ATP Synthase uses energy to recreate itself. Mr Skou was the first to show that enzymes can promote the transport of substances through a cell membrane.

Mr Walker and his team found that a running down of the mechanism of ATP Synthase could play a key role in diseases related to ageing. Our ability to convert food into ATP diminishes irreversibly as we age, and such problems could play an important

part in diseases which occur in later life such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

The fact that a British scientist has been included in the scientific Nobel prizes will bring some comfort to British scientists who have become increasingly despondent about government spending on scientific research and development. Since 1986, only three British scientists have won scientific Nobel prizes. By comparison, in 1946-56 British scientists won 10 Nobel prizes, and in the following three decades 11, 12, and eight respectively.

The Nobel Physics prize, worth £600,000, went to Steven Chu, of Stanford University, William D Phillips, of the US National Institute of Standards and Technology in Maryland and Claude Cohen-Tannoudji, of the College de France and Ecole Normale Supérieure de Paris.

"The new methods of investigation that the Nobel laureates have developed have contributed greatly to increasing our knowledge of the interplay between radiation and matter," said the official citation.

The citation explained the complicated work by comparing an atom to a stone sliding along ice. If the atom meets a photon - the particles that make up a light beam - travelling in the opposite direction, the photon's energy is transferred to the atom, slowing it down. If this is done enough times, the atom's speed will be reduced significantly. The laureates have developed ways of using lasers to cool gases to within a few millionths of a degree above absolute zero, -273C, the point at which all motion theoretically stops.

Peter Bance, an atomic physicist at Oxford University, said yesterday: "Their work on 'optical molasses' forms the basis of many experiments in atomic physics done today. It has allowed a whole new realm of incredibly low temperatures to be explored and exploited both in the lab and in the market place. The recent spectacular success of American groups in achieving a new state of matter called BEC was a direct result of techniques pioneered by this years prizewinners."



Rush hour: Commuters wrapped in vinyl fleeing a subway train in Seoul during the city's monthly emergency drill simulating a poison gas attack. Photograph: AFP

## India gags the Queen

The Queen yesterday cancelled a planned speech in Madras, southern India, after the hosts refused to let her speak at a state governor's banquet.

The speech scheduled for today had not been included in the initial programmes discussed by British officials with Indian diplomats. It was raised in a meeting on 7 October, five days before the Queen's arrival, when it was firmly turned down by Indian protocol officials.

"Only one banquet speech is scheduled for a visiting head of state, which is normally given at the banquet hosted by our president," the Indian Foreign Ministry said.

A ministry spokesman, Taimiz Ahmed, said it was not a last-minute cancellation, as was being portrayed by British diplomats.

While the Indians used unusually direct language, the British tried to play down the latest in a series of controversies, calling it a slight misunderstanding. "We are taking no offence," Judith Slater, a government spokeswoman, said.

"If the Indian preference is no exchange of toast in Madras, there is absolutely no problem," Ms Slater said, adding that Buckingham Palace had known of the opposition to the speech, but the Foreign Office had not.

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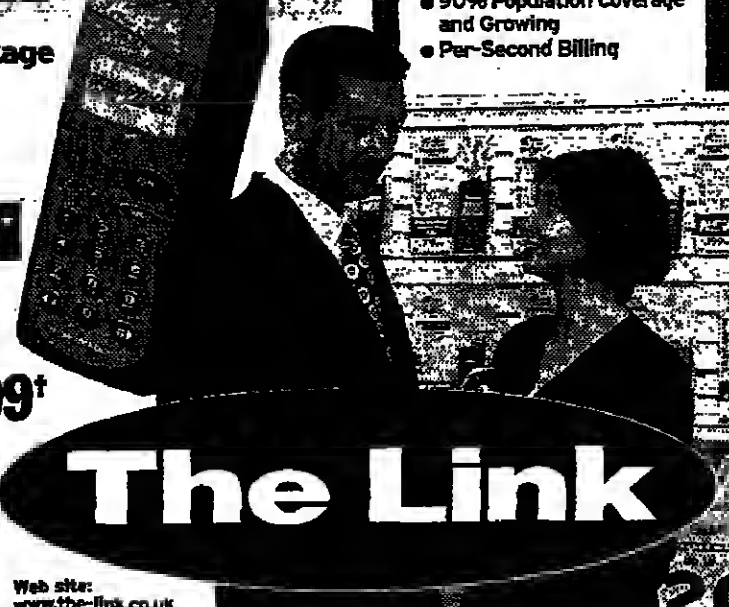
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## Australia rocked by Democrat chief's defection

The high-profile leader of Australia's influential Democrats yesterday quit her party to defect to the Labor opposition, where she said she could better fight Prime Minister John Howard's conservative government.

Democrats leader Cheryl Kernot, whose party holds a key block of seats in parliament's upper house, said she was angry at the government's lack of vision and its failure to counter the populist drive of anti-immigration MP Pauline Hanson.

The government's obsession with its budget and its willingness to exploit the worst in people for political gain had done enormous damage to Australia's social fabric, she said.

Ms Kernot did not warn her party before she announced her decision, but the Democrats said it would continue to play a pivotal role.

The government said Ms Kernot's move was based on ambition, and an apparent leadership vacuum in the Labor party.

Opposition leader Kim Beazley said he was delighted that Ms Kernot would help in the renewal of the Labor party, which was rebuilding after being trounced in the March 1996 election after 13 years in power.

## Mahathir's anti-Jewish tirade branded 'utter nonsense'

The Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad was yesterday accused of speaking "utter nonsense", stirring up embarrassment and damaging the local currency by suggesting that Jews were behind the country's financial woes. Stanley Roth, the US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, who is in Hong Kong for a conference organised by the World Economic Forum, said no one took seriously Mr Mahathir's accusation that speculative attacks on regional currencies were part of a Jewish "agenda". "Furthermore, I think it has hurt Malaysia [in] that we have seen a direct correlation between some of these outrageous allegations and the fall in the currency in Malaysia as well as the stock market."

On Friday, the national Bernama news agency quoted Mr Mahathir, talking about the currency crisis, as saying: "We may suspect that they [the Jews] have an agenda but we do not want to accuse." The Malaysian ringgit fell sharply again yesterday to 3.1575 to the dollar from 3.107 earlier in the session. — Reuters

## Congo PM flees rebel charge

The Congo Republic's Prime Minister, Bernard Kolelas, and some of his ministers have fled to Kinshasa to escape an advance by former military leader Denis Sassou Nguesso, a senior Congolese army officer said yesterday.

But the officer said the whereabouts of President Pascal Lissouba were unknown after a lightning Angolan-backed offensive by rebel militia in the oil-producing country. The officer said Mr Kolelas' arrival signalled the formal collapse of Lissouba's administration and he confirmed that Nguesso's forces were now in control of the capital Brazzaville. — Reuters

## Cubans welcome Che home

Thousands of Cubans stood in silent tribute to welcome the remains of Ernesto "Che" Guevara to Santa Clara, the city where the legendary leftist guerrilla will finally be laid to rest. The remains of Guevara, and six of his former comrades-in-arms who died with him trying to spark a revolution in Bolivia 30 years ago, were brought from Havana in a slow military cortege.

Santa Clara residents, some carrying flowers, crammed the streets to see the procession. They packed the park near the Jose Marti library as the cortege came to a halt. The wooden caskets were taken inside the library where they are on display for public viewing before tomorrow's funeral ceremony. — Reuters

## British tourists wounded in Tamil Tiger bomb blast

Tamil rebels brought their secessionist war to the capital yesterday for the first time this year, exploding a bomb in the heart of Colombo and fighting a pitched battle in a government building. There were 15 dead and several Britons were among the 105 wounded.

The dead, all Sri Lankans, included four security guards shot by rebels as they forced their way into the parking lot of the luxury Galadari Hotel to set off a truck bomb, the army deputy chief of staff said. Four civilians and three Tamil rebels also died in street battles. An army commando was killed storming a government building where rebels holed up after the bombings.

The Galadari hotel is across the street from government offices that President Chandrika Kumaratunga rarely uses. She was at her home about a mile away when the blasts occurred.

The rebels drove a truck laden with explosives into the hotel car park, then fired a rocket-propelled grenade to set it off, the army said. The parking lot abuts the rear of Colombo's trade centre, twin 39-story towers that house the Colombo Stock Exchange and the Information Ministry. The complex, the tallest in Sri Lanka, was inaugurated on Sunday and was probably a main rebel target.

After the bomb blasts, three rebels took refuge in the five-story building that houses Sri Lanka's state-run newspapers. Sri Lankan army commandos lobbed grenades into the building and stormed inside. Shortly afterward workers emerged, but grenade and machine-gun fire continued inside for hours.

The truck-bomb and cyanide capsules are hallmarks of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the main rebel group that has been fighting since 1983 to carve out an independent homeland for Sri Lanka's Tamil minority.

The BBC reported that the Tigers denied responsibility for the attack. But the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry spokesman, Ravinatha Ariyaratne, blamed

the Tigers, saying the attack proves they "do not care for international opinion or the safety of civilians, including foreigners who have nothing to do with the present conflict".

It was the first major terrorist attack this year in Colombo, where security has been stepped up as the war in the north with the Tamil rebels intensified.

Since May, the Tigers have suffered heavy losses in one of the conflict's biggest battles, defending the northern highway to the Jaffna Peninsula against a major military assault. The government says 2,000 people have died in the five-month battle.

Yesterday's explosions and gun battle were barely 200 yards from the site of the 1996 suicide-bombing of the Central Bank that killed 88 people and injured 1,400.

More than 50,000 people have been killed since the uprising began. Analysts said the attack was possibly a strong message from the LTTE that they cannot be left out of the government's efforts to end the war. The two sides are not speaking. — AP Colombo



هَذَا من الأصل

## Street fighting men create Wild West in Papua

Violence is spreading in Papua New Guinea, as lack of opportunity and access to modern weaponry exacerbate traditional tribal tensions. Our correspondent explains how the rascals are worse than they sound

Every other week, usually on pay day, the town of Mt Hagen in the mountains of Papua New Guinea plays host to a famous fortnightly rock concert. Despite its status as capital of the Western Highlands province, Mt Hagen is not a place rich in cultural amenities: a couple of hotels (the third one burned down in mysterious circumstances earlier this month), an expatriate sports and social club, all of them behind high walls wreathed with razor wire.

The "rock concert", too, is unconventional, as an Australian policeman, on official loan to the Papuan government explains. "We call it the rock concert for

BY RICHARD  
LLOYD PARRY

a very simple reason," he says. "The clan people from the villages pick up their money for the fortnight. Then they come into town, they form a big crowd, and for a couple of hours they throw rocks at one another."

The Papua New Guinea Highlands, an isolated pocket of tribal people first encountered by the outside world less than 70 years ago, have a history unlike anywhere else in the world, but their atmosphere today is that of a tropical frontier territory. This is a region on the margins of modern civilisation, a country of miners and missionaries, and a magnet for fortune seekers in gold, oil and gas. In the towns, indigenous people mix with a flotilla of assorted foreigners - preachers, lawmen and fortune-hunters. In the countryside, a single asphalt highway stretches from the Solomon Sea almost to the Indonesian border; the rest of the territory is largely connected by loose tracks.

The police are few and under-resourced, and it is madness to walk anywhere after dark. If the Highlands are the Wild West of Papua New Guinea (PNG), then Mt Hagen is their Dodge City. But its problems are no more than an especially acute

version of the state of lawlessness that afflicts much of the country. "Undoubtedly," as PNG's newly appointed Police Commissioner, Peter Agilo, said this week, "crime in the country is out of control."

The most remarkable thing about crime here is not its frequency, but its variety. With the exception of religious conflict, PNG has just about every kind of violence you can list, including a bloody secessionist

rebellion in the island of Bougainville. In Mt Hagen alone, there is tribal fighting, sports hooliganism, political violence and straightforward banditry.

Last week began wholesomely enough, with a rugby league match between the Mt Hagen Panthers and a team from the coastal town of Lae. Unfortunately, the opposing supporters do not only differ in their sporting affiliation; they are also members of neighbouring and highly antagonistic

tribes. In the middle of the match, a young member of the Jika clan made the mistake of cheering too loudly for Lae, and found himself being beaten up by Hagen-supporting representatives of the Moge tribe. After Lae's victory, the fight spread onto the streets of Mt Hagen. By the end of the week, cars, coffee plantations and a dozen houses all over the province had been destroyed.

The tribal rivalries have been compli-

cated this month by elections to the Highlands local government. Like rugby teams, local politicians draw their support from tribal sources. For the villages, having a local man on the council can make the difference between travelling to market on a sealed road or a mud track, and as tribal flash points ballot boxes are as dangerous as rugby pitches. In Mt Hagen tribal fighting forced the voting to be suspended. For the last two days, shots have been fired in

On the margins: A Yali boy of the Highlands plays an initiation ritual. Tribal rivalries and growing economic expectations have pushed crime out of control. Photograph: Chris Rainier, Where Masks Still Dance: New Guinea, published by Little, Brown price £37.50



the town either in warning by the police or in anger by political opponents.

Complementing the danger of tribal fighting is the problem of "rascals", a pidgin term which can describe anything from a pickpocket to a rapist or armed robber. White, armoured cars bearing the names of private security companies glide about the streets of Mt Hagen, carrying the payroll. The last bank hold-up was in August: by the law of averages another one is due soon. Every business in town has a uniformed security guard and steel mesh across its doors and windows.

Tribal fighting and the struggle for wealth and resources have been going on in the Highlands for centuries, but two things have combined to make their effects much worse. One is the rise in population - longer life expectancies and increased access to education have created an underclass of frustrated young men who drift into cities quite incapable of meeting their economic expectations. The second problem is weaponry. When the rules of tribal warfare were formulated, the weapons of choice were spears and bows and arrows. Today, the same people are fighting one another with pistols, shotguns and automatic rifles.

The range of hardware in circulation in PNG is daunting. Many of the firearms are handmade, crude arrangements of pipes, ball bearings and nails which are almost as likely to blow off the fingers of their owner as to blind his adversary. But crimes are also perpetrated with pump-action shotguns, self-loading rifles and even M-16s. A newspaper report last week hinted at the source of some of this weaponry. During an enquiry into an army mutiny in July it emerged that six AK-47 assault rifles and two rocket launchers have mysteriously

"walked" from PNG Defence Force Stores. "The word rascal can mean a petty thief or a pickpocket, but the worst of these people are well-organised professional bank robbers," says Warwick Hatcher, manager of PNG's biggest security firm, Securimax. "A lot of them are ex-forces, weapon-trained. Our armoured cars can stand up to an M-16 round from reasonably close up. But if they get their hands on one of those rocket launchers, then we're in trouble."

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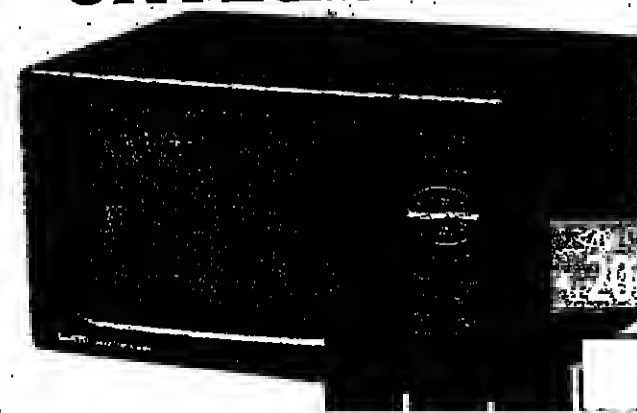
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مکدا من اذ صل









**Putting an end to months of speculation, Germany's leader yesterday finally named his successor. Imre Karacs in Bonn reports on the announcement which heralds the dawn of the post-Kohl era.**

The King has spoken. "My wish is that Wolfgang Schäuble should one day become Federal Chancellor," pronounced Helmut Kohl during a television interview.

The party he has led to four successive victories will interpret that as a royal command. Never before has the 67-year-old leader of the Christian Democrats bestowed such an honour on anyone, although he had hinted Mr Schäuble was his favoured dauphin.

Mr Kohl had always been led by the

maxim that anointing a successor turns the incumbent into a lame duck. But it has become apparent in the last of his 15-year reign that the party and the country want change. They would vote one last time for a chancellor named Helmut Kohl, but on the understanding that he would hand over to the younger generation during his last term. Even for the faithful, the thought of 20 years under Helmut Kohl seemed too horrible to contemplate.

• Mr Schäuble, 55, fits the bill. He may lack the folksy qualities of his boss, but he enjoys a great deal of popularity, and is reputed to possess one of the sharpest intellects on the German political scene. He is a consummate deal-maker, blessed, unlike his boss, with an astounding eye for detail. Whether he also has a broader vision required in the top job is a subject of debate.

The contrast between Mr Schäuble's vigour and Chancellor Kohl's depleting energy has become obvious of late. On Mon-

day, Christian Democrat delegates attending their party's conference in Leipzig yawned through a lacklustre Kohl speech. A day later, they were on their feet, warmly applauding Mr Schäuble's electrifying analysis of the tasks ahead.

Mr Schäuble has filled the number-two post since 1991, becoming leader of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group after a miraculous recovery from an assassination attempt. The attack, by a deranged man, left him a paraplegic, confining him to a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

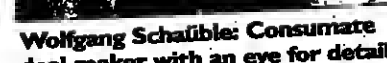
The question deemed too distasteful to ask for a long time was finally posed by *Stierne* magazine earlier this year. "Can a cripple run Germany?" screamed the cover. "I know I could actually do any job," was Mi-  
Schäuble's firm reply.

Before his current assignment, he had served as interior minister, headed the chancellery and administered the national party organisation. What he has never

done is work in the provinces; a point repeatedly made by opponents.

But he has been a loyal, competent supporter of Mr Kohl. He has taken flak for many cock-ups, but emerged unscathed. He is credited with drawing up the government's tax reform proposals, but escaped popular censure when they fizzled out this summer. Mr Schäuble appears to be as firm a believer in European integration and monetary union as the Chancellor. He fits the bill "son of Kohl" perfectly.

There is, of course, the little matter of elections to consider before the coronation. There are still 11 months before Germans go to the polls. Assuming a Kohl victory, the Chancellor's script foresees the introduction of the euro on 1 January 1999, the government's move to Berlin later that year and then abdication in a blaze of glory. It is assumed that Mr Schäuble is patient enough to wait that long. Whether Germany is another matter.



Poland's Solidarity bloc and the smaller Freedom Union yesterday adopted a little-known academic, Jerzy Buzek, 57 (pictured right), as their choice for prime minister of a new centre-right coalition government. Solidarity beat the outgoing government of ex-communists in elections last month and therefore had a right to name the prime minister. Mr Buzek was top AWS policy adviser before the polls. He owes his rise entirely to the Solidarity bloc chief Marian Krzaklewski, who plans to continue the scenes as head of the caucus he formed and right-wing parties.



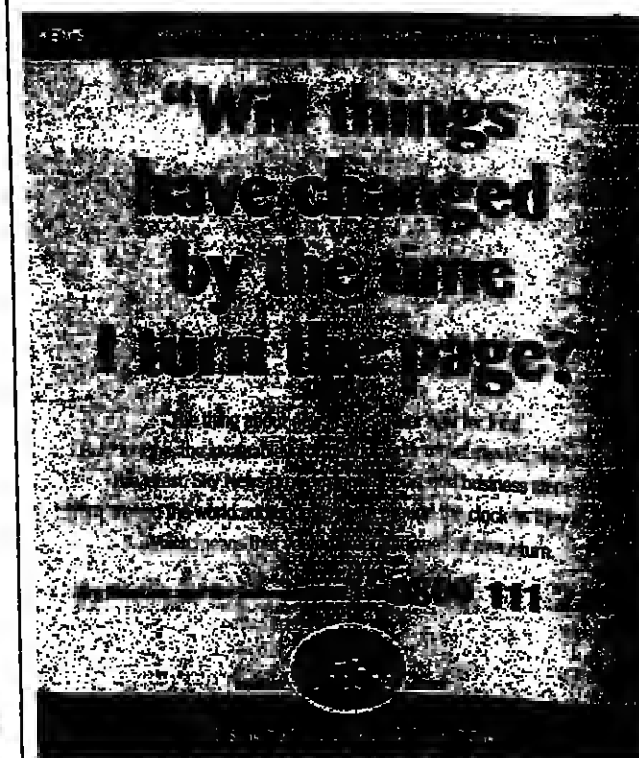
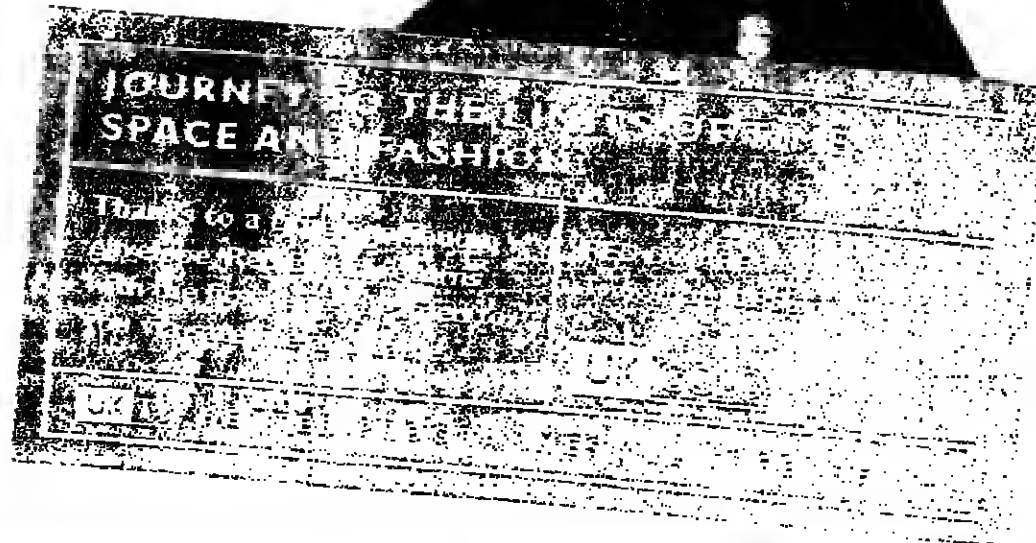
The American ambassador to Switzerland attacked decisions by two US states to penalise leading Swiss banks for what is seen as failure to answer for their role in the Holocaust. The ambassador, Madeleine Kunin, said punitive measures were counterproductive. On Tuesday, California said it had stopped dealings with four Swiss financial institutions including Switzerland's three biggest banks, Swiss Bank Corp, Credit Suisse Group and Union Bank of Switzerland. Last Friday, New York City said it declined UBS's proposal to provide a letter of credit for a note sale because of the bank's handling of Holocaust issues.

### No go area: Blockaded lorries in France last year

A year after the strikes that paralysed Continental motorway networks, British lorry drivers are again facing a "winter of discontent", the British Road Haulage Association warned. Greek hauliers are poised to strike from Friday over proposed changes to heavy goods vehicle legislation while French drivers have announced industrial action starting 2 November unless demands on pay and conditions are met. Talks between French haulage unions and the authorities continue, but the lorry drivers threaten a repeat of last year's holidays if they break down. Neil Kinnock, European transport commissioner, has been meeting road haulage federations from Britain, Ireland, Spain and other countries hit by last year's delays. More than 1,000 British firms have submitted claims but many will not qualify under French law.

— Katherine Butler, Brussels

Russia's Communist-led lower house of parliament put off a no-confidence vote in the government for a week after a dramatic eleventh-hour appeal for compromise by President Boris Yeltsin. The 450-member State Duma decided to delay the vote to allow time to consider Mr Yeltsin's unexpected intervention, telephoned to the chamber after two hours of debate in which the government's economic reforms were lambasted.



How long has your company been in business?

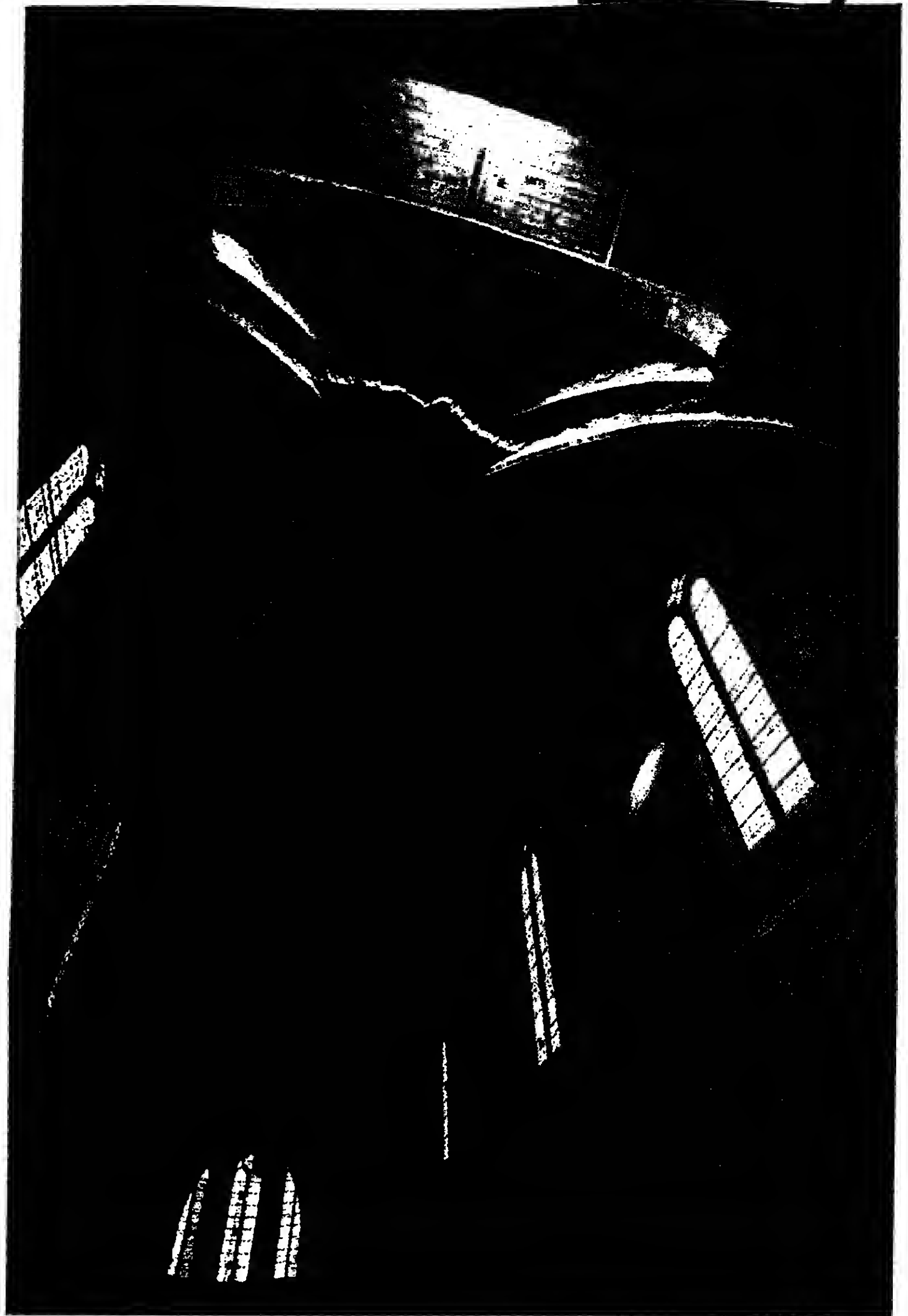
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In the roof of the basilica, a yawning gap exposes the concrete arch which was probably Giotto's nemesis; it made the building rigid and trauma-prone in a way the original wooden ones did not. And here are parts of the fresco brick by brick (top) a fallen cherub, (centre) an eye of St Francis. Above, restorers begin the task of sifting through the remnants of a masterpiece.



## Inside the Assisi basilica, a sight to make saints weep

These are the first still photographs of Giotto's ceiling after the earthquake damage of three weeks ago. The question now is if and when we shall see it restored. The answer, as Andrew Gumbel reports, will depend on politics quite as much as on craftsmen's skill.

They mumble in the back streets of Assisi that the recent earthquakes are a punishment from God for the venality of the Franciscan friars who oversee the religious buildings of the town. They mumble, too, about a long-standing curse on the great Basilica of St Francis – a monument far too grandiose and self-important, they say, to suit the tastes of the great patron of humility, nature and the poor.

Whatever the metaphysical reasons, the tangible evidence of the tremors of the past three weeks are stark indeed. Panels from two great masterpieces inside the Upper Church of the Basilica – Cimabue's *Four Evangelists* and *The Doctors of the Latin Church*, attributed to Giotto or his school – tumbled down from their brick vaults at either end of the church on September 26, killing four people, and further little pieces of the building have been crumbling with the successive aftershocks that have followed.

Last week, the tympanum at the south transept began to crumble, and has since been shrouded in scaffolding to prevent it bringing a whole side of the church down.

Technical experts have begun surveying the roof of the whole edifice to find ways to shore it up against further damage, but they have not yet dared take a proper scout around the interior for fear of further tremors.

The future of one of the seminal buildings of the dawn of the Renaissance is thus caught in a terrible structural paradox: the risk of further damage is so great that nobody has yet plucked up the courage to take the steps necessary to prevent it. Why should this calamity strike now, in our age of technology, when the Basilica had survived more than seven centuries in a notorious earthquake zone more or less unscathed?

One answer to that question can be gleaned by looking up through the hole created by the collapse of the Giotto panel. In the space between the roof and the decorated vault is the first of a series of concrete beams that date back from the 1960s. According to several art historians and technical experts, these alone may have been enough to make the difference between a few light cracks in the plasterwork and the disaster that has taken place.

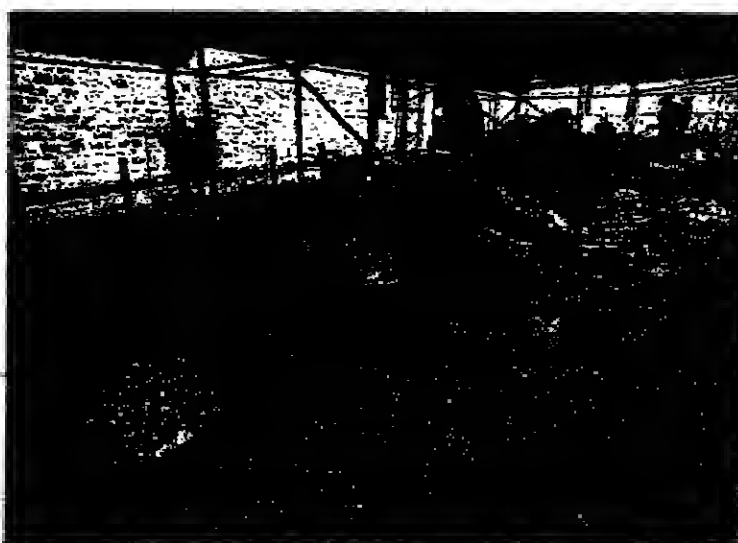
The Culture Ministry officials who made the decision to replace the old wooden beams with concrete more than 30 years ago defend themselves by saying they had to ascertain whether earthquakes or fire posed a greater risk to the Basilica; events, they concede with a shrug of the shoulders, have shown that they made the wrong decision.

But this is poor judgement of the kind that has dogged artwork up and down Italy in recent years. The Culture Ministry has, notoriously, been treated as a dumping ground where politicians like to place rel-

atives and friends with little chance of finding a job elsewhere. The minority that feels genuinely passionate about Italy's artistic heritage is so abused and so badly paid, it is only occasionally that they get a chance to wield their influence appropriately.

That, in turn, helps explain much of what has happened at the Basilica since

### PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN HARRIS



Wheelbarrows of immortality: one full of fragments of Giotto, the other of Cimabue

the first recent earthquake. There has been some sterling work, notably among the art restorers who have almost finished sifting through the rubble of the Giotto and painstakingly catalogued all the pieces according to size, colour and – in a few cases – clearly recognisable figurative chunks. The face of San Rufino, for example, has

been almost completely recomposed and now sits, in a dozen fractured pieces, in a plastic tray filled with sand.

This has all been accomplished despite the uncommon difficulty of the task. The vaults inside the Upper Church were built with vertically-lined bricks, which means that when they caved in and the bricks separated, nothing came out more than a couple of inches wide. Normally, frescoes damaged in this way would be sifted by hand on the spot before being carried away. In this case, though, there were human bodies trapped underneath so the rubble was cleared away in great haste by mechanical diggers. "The plaster is fragile stuff and many of the pieces were inevitably ground to dust," explained the restoration supervisor Paola Passalacqua.

The restorers have had little or no help from the state, however. Ms Passalacqua works for the Culture Ministry office in nearby Perugia, but nearly all her team have been volunteers, energetically backed up by charity workers from a Florentine religious order called the *Misericordia*. They have been working out of makeshift tents on the forecourt outside the entrance to the Upper Church without fanfare; the only comment they have attracted from the government official charged with the overall rescue of the Basilica, a former culture minister called Antonio Paolucci, was a snide remark about the need to get rid of "that pile of rubble" – rubble that just happens to contain the remnants of early Renaissance masters.

There is a long way to go still. The Giotto panel may be sifted and catalogued, but the Cimabue is still inside the church, shovelled into two columns by the diggers. Because of the precariousness of the building,

nobody knows the full extent of damage to the fresco cycle of the life of St Francis, also by Giotto or his school, or to other key artworks such as a magnificent, if rather faded, Cimabue *Crucifix*. Aside from possible cracks, they are all covered in thick, grey masonry dust which is gradually eating into the paintwork. Bits are still falling down, with or without further tremors, although by now mattresses and blankets have been put on the floor to try to keep them from pulverising.

It is too early to say how much of the artworks can be salvaged; if things go well, it could be as much as 80 per cent. "At least there should be islands of decoration that can be joined together through restoration techniques," Ms Passalacqua said. But again, the dead hand of Italian officialdom could be a problem. Restorers say there are already signs of a power struggle between the local experts and the Central Restoration Institute in Rome. As officials scout around for a suitable location for re-composition of the recovered fresco pieces, companies in the private sector with good government contacts are stirring themselves to grab the potentially lucrative contract away from the genuine art lovers.

One curious irony is that those troublesome concrete beams might at last make themselves useful. Too scared to prop up the Upper Church from the inside, the technicians are now considering building a pontoon bridge between the roof and the vault and attaching grips to the top of the vault with epoxy resin. The whole structure would be suspended from the concrete beams. Not, one suspects, a use those Culture Ministry officials in the 1960s ever dreamed of.

## Mr and Mrs David Helfgott are very much at home

David Helfgott is probably the most famous pianist in the world and his wife Gillian is the world's most famous pianist's wife, but not necessarily the most applauded. She is accused of many things, exploitation high among them. But when Ann Treneman met them she found a couple comfortable with each other and a woman with shine.

Gillian Helfgott has been called formidable, a controlling wife, a money-grubber. They say she has exploited her husband David – the extraordinary pianist whose story inspired the movie *Shine* – by encouraging a world tour that some critics have labelled a freak show.

"How could they do this to him?" asked one headline of David who has been known to add the odd flourish to Beethoven and often mutters and talks to the piano on stage. Undoubtedly there will be more of the same – both reviews and mutters – when he appears at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday. There may even be a repeating of the off-stage criticisms about Gillian's taste in shoes or the state of their private life. "They cannot seem to imagine that we have a sex life!" she says. "That is ridiculous. David is a very lovely and sensual man. I am more satisfied than most women!"

Her voice is loud and Australian and the exasperated words float in the still air of the Athenaeum Hotel lounge like brightly coloured balloons. It is breakfast-time and I swear I can hear a collective pricking up of ears. Gillian probably does too and doesn't care one bit. After all, she has spent 14 years at the side of a man who creates a stir wherever he goes. There is no way you can be David Helfgott's wife and be the shy and retiring type.

"Hello, hello, hello. Got to smile, got to smile, got to smile," chatters David as he greets us with a clingy hug and a kind of O-shaped kiss that hangs for a very long time about a half inch away from the cheek. He does the same to the photographer and then tries to shake the hands of almost everyone else in the room. We then sit or, to be more precise, the rest of us sit while he vibrates and chatters.

The wordflow is incessant: if Gillian is talking, he parrots her phrases until he is centre-stage again. "The father was too domineering, too domineering, too domineering," he mutters. He often refers to his father, the man who ruined his life by being too possessive. Peter Helfgott refused to let David go to America to study at the age of 14 and later David would defy him by coming to Royal College of Music in London. But his act of rebellion may have also been his undoing: four months after giving a brilliant concert at which he played the infamous Rachmaninov's Concerto No 3 he was admitted to a mental institution.

He would be in and out of them for 12 more years and it was only after he met

Gillian in 1983 that his "nervous disorder" was controlled to any real extent. The story of his comeback is the subject for the Oscar-winning *Shine* and David is now on the last leg of the post-*Shine* tour.

Back in the Athenaeum lounge, the conversation has jumped from Polish composers to dreams to the "Rakhi" which David is going to play on Monday. He is very good on facts – Gillian says he reads encyclopedias constantly and is a CNN junkie – but often interrupts himself to request a piano, a Coke or a cup of coffee. "This nice gentleman is going to bring me a Diet Coke," he says to the passing waiter as Gillian shakes her head. Every day is a caffeine battle. Later she confides that she has had to lock the Diet Coke, the tea bags and the bottle-opener in the hotel safe. "Can you imagine!"

Not really, but then again one imagines a lot more after 10 minutes with David Helfgott than you ever thought possible. He asks for a piano again but it is off limits for another half hour so that people can eat their breakfast without the

accompaniment of the world's most popular concert pianist. He leaves anyway with a few words of advice. "Don't be addicted, be creative! Don't be greedy!" he says. (Other words from his own language include "potchagoola" for kisses and "pleotchiuous" as in plenty.)

Gillian and David Helfgott are serial optimists but it is clear that the attacks by some music critics over the *Shine* tour have upset them greatly. "It was terrible! They've said he's been exploited, that he is a puppet, only as good as a third-grade student, that he is a fraud," says Gillian. "Some of it was extremely painful. They were writing things that were so off the mark about David being exploited. They all seemed to be acting as if we dragged him out of an institution. David is a 50-year-old man and he makes up his own mind about things."

She returns to the theme of the reviews again and again, chewing over the words of this or that critic. She recounts in detail the opinion of a Miami critic who declared that if David kept playing with the same

joy and honesty then he had every right to be on the concert platform as a musician and not just as a phenomenon. She adds that sometimes David rectifies his playing after reading a constructive review. "As for freak show, well there have been very eccentric performers before. In America, they were calling Pavarotti a freak show this summer. At least David is in good company."

She says she is not defensive. "I know he is doing what he loves. I feel very privileged and I'm very proud. He really is shining on," she says. But a minute later she is defending his habit of muttering on stage. "David is not alone in that. It's terribly important not to crush individual artists. He takes risks. Horowitz used to get some dreadful reviews too. So did Chopin and Beethoven."

It is at this point that I start to like Gillian Helfgott because she obviously cares so much. "But aren't the critics missing the point?" she asks. "My question is: who is doing more for classical music in the world, the critics or David Helfgott?"

"He's had standing ovations around the world, even in Switzerland and France where they usually are fairly slow to stand up. And it's not just because of *Shine*. He was on tour for 10 years before that. He gets standing ovations because he is passionate about music, takes risks and brings so much joy to the stage. He loves the piano. It's his life and he runs up to it like a child. There are no barriers with David. He read one review that said the night was a very sad occasion and he turned to me and said: 'Darling, how is four standing ovations a sad occasion?'"

Gillian Helfgott used to be a professional astrologer – she is a triple Sagittarius and he is a Taurus with Gemini rising – and she believes it was her destiny to be David's partner. "David is an extraordinary human being. I'm a good solid energetic backstop." She is 65 and he is 50 and she says that she doubts a younger woman could have dealt with the issues. "He needed somebody there 24 hours a day and he hadn't had that since his first marriage went wrong," she says.

Gillian Helfgott is a professional astrologer and a sagacious optimist who believes it her destiny to be with David. Fifteen years his senior at 65, she says maturity is a distinct advantage when it comes to dealing with a phenomenal husband and a cynical band of critics.

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz



## I'm not an irresponsible grandma, but I want the kids to have fun

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE

WHAT READERS SAY



### DILEMMAS

Sandra's grandchildren are staying with her for a while when their parents are away, but her daughter-in-law has laid down stringent rules – no TV or sweets, bath twice a day, and a left-over punishment imposed on the boy. Sandra wants their time with her to be happy – can she break the rules?

It's said that the reason grandparents and grandchildren get on so well is that they share a common enemy. This isn't always true, but sometimes grandparents and grandchildren get a great kick out of breaking the rules and having fun together in a way that the children never normally have with their parents. That special grandparent's role is, surely, to provide love, treats, trips to the funfair, chocolates and at least half an hour extra staying up time after bedtime.

My grandmother and I used to go on wild trips to Littlehampton when I was young and spend what seemed like vast sums of money at the local Butlin's fun-fair every night, going on every ride imaginable, from the dodgems to the Big Dipper. For lunch we had plums and ices on the beach, donkey rides galore, jaunts on a miniature railway, games on the miniature golf ending up with a late and "grown-up" walk along the front looking at the twinkling lights before having a story before going to bed. It was wonderful, and taught me more about how an adult can enter a child's world than any number of odd concessions allowed by my parents.

Sandra's natural granny instincts have been hampered, however, by someone who sounds more like a concentration camp warden than a mother. And anyway, how dare this woman impose her rules on her mother-in-law's house?

Sandra could sail close to the wind. She could take the children swimming once a day to avoid the second bath; she could get videos out to watch on television or take them to the cinema; she could give them ices instead of sweets. And certainly she could refuse to carry out a punishment

meted out by the boy's mother. Or she could secretly flout all the rules and swear the children to secrecy. I think a child could cope with this without being damaged too much. "This is our little secret," she could say as she takes them, and the television, up to bed at midnight.

I think it would be better, however, to wring her hands and say to her daughter-in-law, as if apologising for being clean out of sugar: "I'm terribly sorry but we don't have any rules in this house except the few that I impose. Would you not trust me to look after the children in my own way? I assure you I will see they are safe and happy. And I'm sure it would do the children good if they were to learn that in other people's houses they have to obey other people's rules and go along with their way of life." If she really wants to lay the manipulative emotional blackmail on thick she could add, slyly: "I think it would be a useful learning process for them."

She could argue that few of us carry our own ways of life into other people's houses like so. Instead of slopping around in our dressing gowns over supper, picking at yesterday's old pasta with our fingers as we watch the telly, and mooching off to bed at ten o'clock in a sulk, we put on our best face, get dressed up, eat with knives and forks; we allow ourselves to have a good time – to eat and drink far more than we would at home. She could even imply that her set of rules are far more stringent than her daughter-in-law's, only different, and there just wouldn't be room for two sets.

And keep quiet about the fact that one of her prime rules is that every child in her house has a thoroughly enjoyable, exciting and relaxing time.

**Don't detract from the enjoyment of the visit**

I think grandparents should have some sort of idea as to how their grandchildren are being disciplined and try to keep some sort of continuity when they come to stay. At the same time "going to stay with grandma" can be a lovely experience simply because of certain treats or "being allowed to stay up" etc.

As a parent I think I was quite severe but, ye gods, Sandra's daughter-in-law sounds a positive dragon. If her regime is followed to the letter, the children will never be able to enjoy being with grandma as they should. So, as for sweets, television, computer and baths, just smile at daughter and murmur some sort of non-committal agreement, then do what you feel is right after she's gone – one bath a day would seem a reasonable compromise for a start!

However, as for carrying on with Mummy's punishment for the boy, I would draw the line and say quietly and firmly, "No, absolutely not". Whether the punishment fits the crime is neither here nor there but, under no circumstances should you be expected to administer it. I would brook no argument on the matter, let daughter-in-law carry out her own punishments in her own house.

Ted Hooton, *Cheshire, Bucks*

**When in grandma's house, do as she says...**

Your reader should make it plain to her daughter-in-law that these are her children, her rules and she respects them but it is grandma's time and grandma's house and, in this space and time, grandma's rules apply. Tell her that children need to become accustomed to changing sets of rules eg at home and in school and that your rules will not differ so very much from hers. Once over this hurdle try to see what her problem really is and whether she can get help!

Lindsay Brewis

**Relax this is a holiday for the children too**

If Sandra's daughter-in-law is to have a break why not let the children have one too?

She will relax far more with the knowledge that her children are being spoilt and treated as she can't possibly allow in her own routines.

By all means hand them over with one or two dietary "suggestions", but no more! Why put her loving parents-in-law in straitjackets with the children, when the alternative is to relax knowing they too will enjoy

something different?

Sandra, tell her there's no deal if the list comes too!

Mrs Frances Smith

**You can bend the rules without flouting them**

Stick to her rules – it can be so tricky for parents otherwise – but be imaginative! No sweets? – let them help you cook scrummy cakes, puddings and biscuits using quality ingredients. If "no sweets" means no sugar at all, raid your cookery books for fun savouries. Restricted TV and computer? Take your grandchildren to the cinema and buy mega cartons of popcorn or crisps. Two baths? Take them swimming. But don't agree to the punishment: that's your daughter-in-law's job – the transgression happened in her home.

Francesca Wool

### NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

I have had recurrent back pain for the last 10 years, which means I have had to give up my job. I'm in daily pain and my life has become very restricted. I cannot walk far or drive far or sit for long periods. I have had every kind of conventional and alternative therapy so I don't want to know of any new cures – I've

even been on a Pain Management course at my local hospital. And most of the time I can cope.

But what I'm finding most difficult and hurtful is that a couple of friends have told me that other friends think I'm malingering, and that if I really wanted to I could do more – such as

participate in social activities and so on. What do I say so that they take my problem more seriously? How do I convince them that this isn't "just backache" and that I'm doing what I can? I don't want pity; just understanding.

Christine

who has a suggestion quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora. Send comments to me at the Features Department, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. (Fax: 0171-293 8182) by Tuesday morning. And if you have a dilemma of your own that you would like to share, please let me know.

ملف من الأدب







## The Lords do not need reform – they need abolition



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The Lords are back. This week the business of the government of the country – the nation said by its prime minister in his Brighton peroration to be in such dire need of modernisation – is being debated in a chamber where flummery and feudal succession rule the day. Through this winter, important measures intended to prepare Britain for the 2000s will be carried through in a gilded chamber made up, mostly, of Tory has-beens and aristocratic holdovers whose principal recent contributions to public policy have been to seek to delay the sequestration of revolvers and the defence of fox-hunting.

Let's have no nonsense about Bagehot and the dignified elements in the constitution. The House of Lords is an indefensible anachronism. Indeed, Bagehot himself once said that the best antidote to enthusiasm for the Lords was to go and watch it at work. And a little water has passed under Westminster Bridge since he said that. Too much water. Abolition of an hereditary

second chamber is today the undoubted test of Labour's genuine commitment to changing this country for the better. Tony Blair declared that David Lloyd George was one of his 20th century heroes. Let's forget that the Welsh wizard ended up a shrunken effigy on the Lords' benches and remember him in 1909 and 1911 – a constitutional reformer of unparalleled energy, unafraid to pit people against the peers.

Yesterday the Labour leader in the Lords (someone who, let's face it, never quite made it in the representative arena) was arguing for "streamlining" the ancient ceremonies of entry to this august chamber. He had a revolutionary proposal. The time it takes a new peer to be introduced should be cut. Novitiates stand, decked out in finery to doff their caps to the Lord Chancellor three times. (Read that and then ask why it is John Wells the satirist who shortly has a book coming out about the Lords.) The Lord Chancellor, you might think, has better things to do than sit around on a wool-

sack taking the pro forma greetings of people in ermine – he has a department to run, Cabinet committees to chair, a legal aid system to reform. But no, in modern Britain, Tudor ceremonial takes precedence over business.

It won't do to attempt to breathe a bit of new life into this constitutional corpse, as Labour has done with the creation of a few new (often female) peers. The House of Lords has to go and the sooner the Blair government bites that bullet, the sooner the shape of its first term of office will be settled and critical paths to its priorities for change identified (there ought, for example, to be a clear relationship between the timing of electoral reform and replacement of Parliament's second chamber).

None of the arguments for reform are new. Equally, none of them have lost their urgency or savour. It is not just that aristocracy is anachronistic as a principle for organising government. It's also that they are lesser beasts than before. If the House of Lords had a

Burleigh or a Bacon, or a Salisbury or a Macmillan, at least we could applaud their style and statecraft. This bunch are very pale, timid and marginal by comparison.

There are two positive arguments for reform. One is representativeness. A chamber with so few women, black people, people of the diversity that is modern Britain is unacceptable. It would not do as a parish council, let alone a governing assembly. If Mr Hague, who has been shilly-shallying recently on Lords reform, does not see that follows from his new age tolerance he is no logician. Mr Blair, in turn, has to be persuaded that he cannot mandate such representativeness. It has to flow out of the process of election and democratic choice (and, yes, he will recognise there a programme for reform of political parties as well). The upper chamber has, in other words, to be an elected body. Labour's desire to move in stages, first removing the rights of hereditary peers, then turning the Lords into an organ of democracy, is too

slow. There is a serious danger of never quite getting to the second stage.

The Lords, in short, cannot be democratised but there are versions of a second chamber of Parliament that might work well. The second argument for reform rejects the idea that all political authority should reside in a single chamber, however brilliantly elected. Other jurisdictions, as diverse as Germany and the US, show how a second legislative chamber can include into the political process areas, groups and interests that might otherwise be excluded. The method of election and the exact role of a second chamber are for absorbing debate. But what is to stop Labour declaring its aim, now, and clearly? Not Lords "reform" but abolition. And then the creation of a new second chamber, elected on a reformed voting system but perhaps with longer tenure and specific, subordinate powers. It could even sit in that gilded place. And then, if he is any good, my Lord Cranborne can win a seat fair and square.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor  
and include a daytime telephone number.  
Fax 0171 393 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk  
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.  
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

### LETTERS

#### Gays and the law

Sir: The Independent has always been well to the fore in advocating gay law reform. It is, therefore, a matter of some concern that you believe that in civilian life the age of consent is "the last serious piece of legislation that treats homosexuality as a lesser, shameful expression of human love" (Andrew Marr on the gay age of consent, 8 October). Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 should be repealed at the earliest opportunity. The current Sexual Offences Acts are riddled with anti-gay provisions.

It is not just the criminal law which needs reform. Under employment legislation there is nothing illegal about rejecting a job applicant on the grounds of sexuality. Unfair treatment of lesbians and gay men once in employment is not itself illegal. There is an urgent need for a Sexual Orientation Discrimination Act which will amend both the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act.

And in the long run – probably ten years at least – there is the whole debate on gay marriages and domestic partnerships.

It was Lord Lester of Herne Hill who said last May, "The way in which a society treats unpopular minorities is a litmus test of the extent of its civilisation." We have still some way to go before the UK can claim to have passed that test.  
MARTIN BOWLEY QC  
President, the Bar Lesbian and Gay Group  
London WC1

Sir: The decision of the Government to oppose at the European Court the application of former servicemen for redress following dismissal from the armed forces on account of homosexuality is to be much regretted (report, 13 October). To deny citizens of this country the opportunity to defend it with their lives if necessary is a matter for shame. All the servicemen concerned had excellent records and in times of short-fall in recruiting it is absurd to lose people of this quality.

I served in the late Sixties in the RAF and narrow-minded people who bring up the "sharing the showers" argument are

talking claptrap. There were many men who were gay and many who were straight and it made not the slightest difference when it came to doing the job – and the job in South Arabia in 1966/7 was awful.  
GRAHAM YOUNG  
Newbury, Berkshire

Sir: On 11 October you reported that some Manchester gay clubs now have a door policy to turn away heterosexuals. I took this to mean that, like most other clubs, they simply reject those they don't like, or who are not known to the door staff.

Now you tell us (14 October) that one of the advantages of being a woman is that you can hate football and not be called "homosexual".

Please stop the stereotyping. As a gay man with a beard who does not like lager or discos – thereby ensuring my non-admittance to several Manchester

clubs for either or both sexes I am sure – I am also a life-long supporter of Tottenham Hotspur. I must say that of all these things it is the last which causes me the most angst.  
KEITH FLETT  
London N17

#### Battle of Heathrow

Sir: Polly Toynbee's article (13th October) on the planning inquiry for Terminal 5 at Heathrow makes much of the environmental impact and the role of tourists but ignores business travellers.

I run a small consulting company designing theatre buildings. With a team of 35 people, we work internationally – 43 countries in the last twenty years. We and our clients need good, frequent and reliable airline connections. We are not a wealthy mega-corporation with deep pockets.

Ms Toynbee argues that air

travel could be rationed, with the rich who wish to travel frequently buying more rations from the poor. That system is ludicrous in a business context.

Business travellers are already penalised by high fares and ever-increasing taxes on travel. I personally travel over 300,000 miles per annum on business, a figure I long to reduce. Perhaps the more rapid introduction of video conferencing could reduce airline travel?

DAVID T STAPLES  
London N8

Sir: I have just had the misfortune to travel out and back into the country via Heathrow (letters, 15 October). What a desperate place! The traffic is colossal and the amount of time taken finding the long-term car park, waiting for a courtesy bus, being driven from one terminal to another is inordinate. On returning one has to suffer even more delay with

late landings after stacking over South-east England.

How is the construction of another terminal going to improve matters? Better by far to develop some of our regional airports. Birmingham is a pleasure to go through. The facilities are not over-stretched and the staff are far less frazzled.

How does one get the planners to drop their blinkers? Life does exist outside the South-east corner.  
GEOFF WARREN  
Bodenham, Herefordshire

#### Forget the pound

Sir, Peter Johnson (letter, 14 October) need have no concern over whether a common currency could work in an area with large disparities of income, low mobility of the labour force and few arrangements for redistributing wealth from the more to the less prosperous areas through a federal

tax and benefit system. Sterling has functioned as a common currency for many years in such an area – the UK.

During the past fifty years the pound sterling has fallen from \$4 to \$1.60 and in the last thirty or so it has fallen from 12 to 2.8 against the German mark. Most of us would be delighted to be rid of it and have it replaced by a stable unit of European currency. It is very unlikely that any replacement currency would perform in the long term worse than the pound has done already.  
DAVID J HUTCHINSON  
Petersfield, Hampshire

Sir: Chrysler has said it may withdraw from the UK if we do not join the single currency (report, 15 October). If we join will they undertake to sell at a "Euro" price, the same as that in other countries?  
JONATHAN YOUNES  
Chislehurst, Kent

#### Accent syndrome

Sir: Foreign accent syndrome (Seen and Heard, 13 October) is one of the most puzzling communication disorders which may follow a stroke. You say there are only 12 documented cases; there are many more. Our helpline has received several inquiries.

The disorder is not a true "foreign accent" but results from changes to intonation and vowel quality. It is never identical with the accent concerned, but mimics features of it.

Foreign accent syndrome may be one of the milder disorders of communication which can result from damage to the cerebral cortex. At the other end of the spectrum is total loss of language (aphasia) in which the person is unable to understand language, speak, read, write or gesture.  
CHARLOTTE PAINTER  
Action for Dysphasic Adults  
London SE1

#### Chocs away!

Sir: As a British citizen living in America (and as a devoted chocaholic), I was intrigued to read (report, 11 October) about criticism from MEPs of British chocolate. Having been in England on holiday, I have just filled my suitcase with chocolates to take back to the States, for myself and my American friends who have requested favourites such as Cadbury's Fruit and Nut, Yorkie raisin and biscuit and Maltesers.

Many American friends agree that British chocolate is far superior to American chocolate such as Hersheys or Reeses, which is too sweet and is coated with a waxy substance to prevent melting, and far better than most European chocolate, especially Swiss or German, which is too sickly and sweet. One American friend pinpointed the very thing which the MEPs are criticising: the high milk content of British chocolate, which gives it a wonderful velvety texture.  
VICTORIA HRENCACIN  
Chicago

#### High and drive

Sir: Jackie Flaherty (letter, 13 October) asks whether cannabis impairs the ability to drive. Reports from the USA and the Netherlands suggest there is little to worry about. A report by the Washington Department of Motor Vehicles has stated: "Simulated driving scores for subjects experiencing a normal social 'high' and the same subjects under control conditions are not significantly different. However, there are significantly more errors for alcohol-intoxicated than for control subjects."  
ALUN BUFFERY  
Norwich

#### No help for it

Sir: I agree with Thomas Sutcliffe ("Burning in cyber hell", 13 October) that consulting "Help" in any computer programme is usually no help at all. When I want to know how to get my computer to do something (or more often, stop doing something) I consult my 10-year-old son. He nearly always knows. Mind you, this is usually because what I want the computer to stop doing is something he has made it do.  
HENRY WICKENS  
Luxembourg

## Ever been chewed by the wildlife? You have? Then I'm afraid I've got some bad news



MILES KINGDON

Yesterday I listed some of the ways in which we can usefully distinguish first-, second- and third-rate nations, and sat back, waiting for my erudite readership to supply me with enough further examples to form today's article. Not a single soul has volunteered to help. I realise, belatedly, that this is because their letters will not have reached me yet, so I will for the moment have to go on with the good work myself.

Here we go!

A first-class nation issues small, dingy postage stamps.

A second-class nation issues colourful postage stamps depicting scenes from its own history.

A third-class nation issues flamboyant postage stamps depicting scenes from other people's history.

A first-class nation enters the Eurovision Song Contest fearfully, knowing that it might win.

A second-class nation enters the Euro-

vision Song Contest fearfully, knowing that it might win yet again for the fourth year in a row.

A third-class nation enters the Eurovision Song Contest joyfully, knowing that, although it will not win, at least its judges (who are more glamorous than its singers) will be seen to vote.

A first-class nation produces coins which are heavy enough to toss without being blown away.

A second-class nation produces coins whose chief value is to be taken away by tourists to operate public telephones and coffee dispensers in their own countries.

A third-class nation produces coins which are so low in value that they are rejected by shopkeepers even in the country of origin.

A first-class nation has a national anthem which sounds like a hymn.

A second-class nation has a national anthem which sounds like a march.

A third-class nation has a national anthem which sounds like a folk dance.

A first-class nation has always contrived to eliminate all its most interesting wildlife some hundred years previously.

A second-class nation has tried but failed to eliminate its wildlife, and is now turning it into a tourist attraction.

People in a third-class nation are from time to time eaten by their wildlife, and are very surprised when zoologists come along and stop them taking retaliatory measures.

A first-class nation does not fear the possibility of a military take-over.

A second-class nation has had military take-overs in the past, but does not believe they will ever happen again.

A third-class nation does not fear the possibility of a civilian take-over.

In a first-class nation a state of thinness is known as anorexia.

In a second-class nation a state of thinness is known as chic.

In a third-class nation a state of thinness is known as malnutrition.

All first-class nations claim to have invented television, the telephone, submarines, the photograph, etc.

All second-class nations claim to have a perfectly adequate television, telephone service, etc, operating for at least 12 hours a day.

The communications systems of all third-class nations operate on gossip and rumour.

When a traffic light turns red and stays red in a first-class nation, motorists will wait for it to turn green for at least 10 minutes before realising it may have broken down and then very cautiously edge forward to see if anything is coming, and then even more cautiously cross against the lights.

When a traffic light turns red in a second-class nation, motorists will normally slow down out of respect and then cross without stopping.

There are no traffic lights in third-class countries except outside the presidential palace.

There are no presidential palaces in first-class nations except in Washington DC. Only second-class nations still retain monarchies.

Only third-class nations name streets after days in history.

All first-class nations play games which are played by no other nation in the world, except their former colonies.

All second-class nations have at least one boxing world title hopeful.

All third-class nations enter teams for the Olympics, no matter how hopeless, because they once won a weight-lifting medal.

In first-class nations, punctuality is a virtue.

In second-class nations, it is an affectation.

In third-class nations, it is a waste of time.



## A new beginning is the way to cure a false start



**POLLY TOYNBEE**

CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

Labour's worst inheritance was the stricken Child Support Agency. Now, trying again to make this misbegotten beast work, the CSA is undergoing another upheaval. This is the last chance to kick-start this hunk of bureaucratic wreckage into life. A fundamental review is in progress – a chance to write off the agency's disastrous past and start all over again.

That means the CSA will almost certainly write off a large number of the backlog of cases that still hang round its neck, dragging down its statistics. New cases may be doing better, but while the old ones lie in yellowing stacks, the agency will always be counted a disaster. Politically, Labour could write off Tory mistakes from the agency's bungled launch. The National Audit Office was so outraged by the CSA's figures this year that they refused to accept its accounts, complaining that eight in ten cases contained mistakes, mainly due to the old cases.

News of an amnesty will no doubt strengthen the determination of all those non-paying fathers to sit tight. The fathers' Internet web site will huzz with yet more advice on ways to avoid paying. Glorifying in their mass rebellion, the fathers know that any bureaucracy collapses if enough people refuse to comply.

It will be a bitter day if the CSA does again have to write off thousands more cases, letting so many shameless fathers off the hook. But any non-paying men who read this should know that the agency will only abandon old cases where the mother herself has refused to co-operate. Where mothers want the agency to chase fathers for maintenance, the CSA will plod on.

How has it reached such a state? Only 31 per cent of fathers who have been assessed actually pay the full amount. Another third pay absolutely nothing at all, while the rest have paid something but not the full amount. Getting money out of fathers is harder than extracting an apology from the Tory ministers who ignored all advice when they set the CSA up.

But what now really alarms ministers is the increasing number of women who are refusing to co-operate. Over half of all mothers are refusing to fill out forms, or otherwise using loopholes in the system saying they fear violence, or a more loosely defined "harm" if they proceed with a claim for maintenance. The whole thing was set up to help women, yet now they too are turning their back on it. If even the mothers won't help, then the agency really will be brought to its knees. That's why Labour has just this one chance to change public opinion, to get the mothers onto their side and finally force fathers to pay.

Winning back the women is the name of

the game, but it will be hard work. As it is, mothers on benefit think the CSA is all hassle and no extra money. These mothers who do already get something sometimes from the fathers, however little, rightly reckon they're probably better off with what they've got. If they antagonise such a father by setting the CSA on him, he will stop what he gives now and the CSA will probably fail to get anything else out of him instead.

That is an entirely rational calculation, one that the fathers' movement has been vigorously encouraging, telling men to give a hit under the counter illegally to their ex-partners on social security, so women fear losing that little something if they ever declare it to the CSA. The men coerce their ex-partners, and the women collude because they rightly doubt that the CSA will do any better.

The CSA review is likely to recommend that women should be offered an incentive to co-operate. At the moment mothers on benefit are not allowed to keep a penny of any maintenance paid to them. Women are expected to go through all the agony of chasing the father, filling out the forms, suffering his fury and re-opening old rows without gaining anything for themselves and their children. The Treasury frowns on the idea, calling it a bribe for complying with the law. But they'll never win over the mothers without that bribe, so they'd better pay up.

There are other ways the CSA can prove itself a friend to mothers. For those in work on Family Credit, the CSA could take away the risk that a mother's maintenance might just stop, by paying it themselves and then recouping it from the father.

The agency hopes to win back women by explaining the system to them better, with personal advisers visiting mothers in their own homes. The success of the New Deal pilot schemes for single mothers suggests that lone mothers know very little about how the benefit system works. Once a personal adviser explains to them how much difference maintenance can make to their future income if they ever want a job, many more may co-operate eagerly – so long as these visitors feel like a friend not a menacing threat. The family credit system is fiendishly incomprehensible Housing benefit and then the CSA forms are yet two more layers of bureaucracy from different offices, so having a personal adviser may at last give the CSA the human face it has always lacked. Until now women have complained that access to the CSA has been via anonymous help lines, long delays, and people the other end who don't ever have the right answer.

First, though, the CSA has to persuade women that they really will collect the money. They need headlines showing how well they are doing – and the only way they can do that is by shedding the dead weight of dead duck cases this Government has inherited.

This is the last chance to save the CSA and it may not work. The new reorganisation is to move its headquarters near to the Benefits Agency from whence it first emerged. As welfare-to-work merges benefits, employment and maintenance claims under one personal adviser, then we may bear less of the CSA as a distinct entity.

Most people agree that fathers should pay for their children and the tax-payer should not be left to pick up the bill. Had the Tories heeded advice and introduced the CSA slowly, it would have worked with great popular support. This is one last chance to rescue its battered reputation – but now it must persuade mothers that it really can work, as an ally, not an enemy.



Tony Blair addresses his new MPs

Photograph by Andrew Burman

## Our new MPs: young, but more interested in trivia than rebellion

Sometimes the reforming spirit breaks out in the unlikelyst of quarters. Yesterday Lord Richard, leader of the House of Lords, confirmed that he was planning to modernise the Tudor ceremony through which new members are introduced to his chamber. The antiquated 11-minute ritual in which peers take their places then stand, doff their caps to the Lord Chancellor, and sit three times is to be speeded up in order to cope with a spate of ennoblements, he said.

This move is pure pragmatism, of course. "I think I am entitled to some celerity in the way my troops get in. It's not unreasonable," Lord Richard said yesterday.

But elsewhere in the Palace of Westminster, the story is quite different. Just three months after the wind of change began blowing through the House of Commons, the door has slammed shut and the dust is beginning to settle once more.

As MPs pack their trunks and prepare to return for their Autumn term, a survey has revealed that the new guard elected in May are barely more keen on modernising the place than their predecessors. In the heady days after the election, it really seemed that renewal was on the cards. With 250 new members out of a total of 660, everyone was sure that the stuffy, Victorian procedures of Parliament would be swept away.

Above all, there would be outright rebellion against the gang warfare which is British politics. Now in the presence of normally-functioning adults, the schoolboy humorists would be too embarrassed to continue the catcalls and whoops

that too often pass for Commons debate, and would desist.

Change will not come so easily. This week the parliamentary House Magazine printed the results of a survey conducted among 192 of the 253 new members. There was no shortage of complaints about Parliament and its ways, but the picture that emerged did not suggest the existence of a great, radical, reforming movement.

Almost half the new MPs disliked some aspect of the procedures of the Commons, but only three had a problem with the adversarial nature of the debates. Far more were worried about the size of their offices.

Just one in 10 complained about the "museum-like atmosphere" of the Commons – slightly less than the number who listed the historical lack of the place as a plus point. More MPs were worried about the lack of space, though, and one in seven felt the need to point out that there was too much paperwork.

The "incomprehensible" order paper, the amount of time spent hanging around waiting for late-night votes and even one MP's need for "an office with a window, please" featured in the replies. On the plus side, there was the excellent library, helpful staff and good food. (This last, presumably, was from the 15 per cent who worked as teachers or lecturers and therefore became used to school dinners.)

Calls for a new style of politics did not ring out. Nor did the need for MPs to hold the Government to account or to act independently. No-one expects newly-elected Labour MPs to feel it is time yet to haul their own masters over the



**FRAN ABRAMS**  
HOUSE OF COMMONS REFORM

Loyalty and compliance are the order of the day, and both those who put "being independent minded" at the top of their lists were Conservatives.

Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby for the past 20 years, carried out the survey with Professor Philip Norton from the University of Hull. He said the new intake seemed to see themselves as party people rather than as Parliamentarians. Diligent and committed they may be, but radical they are not. "I turn away both depressed and admiring," he said. "I had high hopes that there was bound to be a tide of change because people would come in and want to improve things. Evidently not. I think it's the facts of political life. They have been

very well organised for campaigning purposes and they haven't really been introduced to Parliament yet."

Talk to any new MP on this subject and you are almost certain to receive a barrage of ideas on how Parliament could be improved. The problem is, most of them are too hasty to do much about it.

Jane Griffiths, Labour member for Reading East, is typical. There was no point in jumping in with both feet to demand change during those first weeks after the election, she said. But her first impression of "some sort of Victorian music hall", had persisted. She worries that some of her colleagues will become institutionalised and will stop worrying about change once they have learned to use the House's labyrinthine procedures.

It is time the place was opened up, she added. Just this week she brought in a party of 10 elderly constituents, two of them in wheelchairs, only to find the rules prevented her from taking more than three at once into the tea room, even in the quiet of the recess.

Jenny Tonge, Liberal Democrat member for Richmond Park, has nicknamed the House, with its gothic architecture and gloomy oil paintings, "Dracula's Castle."

She told a story she heard about the top hat that members

must wear if they want to make a point of order. A few years ago, apparently, there were complaints that this procedure was ridiculous and antiquated, and that it caused several minutes' delay in the chamber while the hat was fetched from its place at one end of the room. So a Commons committee had a think, and came up with a solution. They bought an extra hat for the other end of the room.

Tea rooms? Oil paintings? Hats? Austin Mitchell's survey was clearly right. Asked what they want to change about the House, the new MPs will come up with a raft of trivia.

The truth is that all these small irritations go together to make up a whole that is cumbersome, needlessly confrontational and laughably remote from real life in the 20th Century. The really remarkable thing about the place is that anything is ever achieved there at all.

There is a tide of change in the Commons, but it is not flowing strongly enough to sweep the establishment along before it. Not surprisingly, the new members are getting on with their jobs. They do want to work in a proper, modern Parliament but they also want to help their constituents and to hold on to their seats for a second term. If anything is really going to change, it looks as if the old guard are going to have to do it themselves.

## The participants, at least, were enjoying themselves



**SAM TAYLOR**  
CHELTENHAM DIARY

A recently liberated Edwina Currie arrived at the Cheltenham Festival gagging for it. There was nothing in the hotel that would suffice, she told an intrigued John Walsh, this year's festival director.

Ever accommodating, the hotel management sheepishly suggested room service and a young boy was duly dispatched to fulfil the great one's needs – a double cheeseburger and large fries, hurriedly bought from the High Street.

Suitably satisfied, she gleefully set off to lecture the good ladies and gentlemen of Cheltenham on the excitement of her life thus far. She showed them a couple of recent pur-

chases, one a newly printed T-shirt proclaiming: "I'm the best there is, but I'm not available."

A revelation that caused a huge sigh of relief from the single men in the audience who feared it may have been a Kiss Me Quick Hat.

A piece of promotional attire that the broadcaster Sarah Kennedy was unlikely to need for a while. For Sarah, here to spread the word about her first novel, has nabbed a toy-boy. "It's wonderful," she boasted. "Even though I'm nearly 140, he's only 31 and quite unlike the other men I have known who are all in their forties. He's so sensitive and caring. I highly recommend it." The Cheltenham ladies discretely made notes.

If Ms Currie had arrived earlier her ex-school teacher sensibility could have come in extremely handy for the job of minder for the slightly more colourful members of the Irish Poets Society. As it was, that job was foisted on to John Wyse Jackson, an Irish writer here to publicise his much respected book on James Joyce's father.

With Aiden Higgins in one hand and Dermot Healey in the other, he valiantly trotted them around Cheltenham's finest bars and public houses. A sad

business. None of them were quite authentic enough. Fruit machines, unforgivable. Loud music, see fruit machines. Guinness at not quite the right temperature; and a severe lack of Cheltenham young ladies on to whom they could pour their poetic attentions was the final straw. Desperate, John tentatively suggested they join the more sedate members of the literary establishment at a

delightful wine and nibbles party being thrown at one of the most civilised residences in the town.

They were finally persuaded when John murmured that this house had often played host to none other than the Nobel Prize winner, Seamus Heaney. "Yer man," they both chimed and off they set.

In a library stacked with the works of the great and the



Booker winner Arundhati Roy. Rellandini

good, the lyrical duo settled in for the night. Aiden, ever the aesthetic, nestled comfortably into the chair that Seamus used to sit in while Dermot went off in search of larger prey – the young daughter of the hostess.

He was last seen manoeuvring her out on to the patio and inquiring: "Where's the focking Guinness?" A claxon call he was to repeat each time the South African red moved his way.

The following day rain and bad light fell on the Gloucestershire town heralding the arrival of the nation's favourite umpire, Harold Dickie Bird. He was joined by the accomplished painter and England wicket keeper Jack Russell – who, as one Festival-goer confided in me, is rumoured to be planning to have his hands amputated when he dies and donated to the Lords museum.

Dickie confessed that he was on a bit of a sticky wicket with fellow Yorkshireman Geoffrey Boycott. In his recent autobiography, the purpose of his trip down south, Dickie names what he considers to be his dream 11. And our Geoff isn't on it. The world's most famous finger told us that he has received a message saying, "I want a word with you Dickie Bird. I'm not happy."

But Geoff will be pleased to know that although he wasn't on the dream team, if his life depended on it and he had to select a batsman to save him from being shoved off his mortal coil, Dickie would have no hesitation in selecting Geoff. Who, Dickie added, would be at home right now, counting his money and watching videos of himself.

By the time that news had reached Cheltenham of Arundhati Roy's Booker win she was probably at home doing exactly the same thing, having left the Festival that morning. Her fellow contemporary Indian writers meanwhile were out in the Festival bar celebrating hers and their own personal victories. Some, more than others.

The writer of *Looking Through The Glass*, Mukul Kesavan, looked into the bookies and pocketed £150 while Urvasi Butalia, the Carmen Callil of India, who had earlier defended her views on the débacle of Partition and the extremities of the Empire in a debate entitled *End Of Empire*, was ecstatic. Projecting into the room like a woman who had just pocketed the bonus ball, she threw her fist in the air and announced "The Empire Strikes Back."

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## The EMU factor: Toyota rules out second UK car plant as Vauxhall says sites are safe

Toyota has ruled out building its second European car plant in Britain, partly because the pound is unlikely to be in the first wave of monetary union. But Vauxhall denied it would shift production abroad if the UK failed to enter a single currency. Michael Harrison assesses the mood in industry towards EMU.

The Japanese car giant, Toyota, has abandoned the option of building another assembly line at its Burnaston plant in Derbyshire to manufacture a third model. An announcement on where the £600m investment will be located is due to be made in the new year with France now the clear frontrunner.

The decision to locate the plant on the Continent is based partly on the near certainty that Britain will not be in the first wave of EMU. But it is also linked to Toyota's production schedules. The new model, a small Startet-sized car, is due to go on sale in two years and its biggest markets will be France and Italy.

A Toyota executive said: "It is very unlikely to be Burnaston. The car in question has to be on sale in 1999 and manufacturing it in Britain would not help our European supply strategy. But inevitably EMU is one of the other factors."

Toyota is among a number of large inward investors to have warned that investment decisions could be affected if Britain stays outside the "euro-zone". BMW, which now owns Rover, has said that exports and component orders worth billions of pounds will be hit if EMU goes ahead without Britain.

Siemens of Germany, which has invested more than £1bn in a semiconductor plant in the North-east, is preparing to tell component suppliers they will have to bill it and be paid in euros. The company is one of the most vocal supporters of monetary union and its chief executive, Jürgen Gehrels, is on record as saying it might have made a different investment decision had it known Britain would be so cautious towards EMU.

Nick Reilly, Vauxhall's chairman, said yesterday that joining EMU would provide



Ties to Britain: A Vauxhall representative at the Motor Show at Earls Court, London yesterday. Vauxhall has denied threatening to shut UK plants. Photograph: Rui Xavier

assurance to its parent company, General Motors, that Britain would pursue sound economic policies.

But he refuted reports, based on comments by GM's chief economist, Mustafa Mohatarem, that it would shut its Ellesmere Port and Luton car plants and shift production to the Continent if the Government failed to enter the single currency.

In a radio interview with the BBC's *Financial World Tonight*, Mr Mohatarem said: "A lot of manufacturing jobs that are tied to sales in Europe are tied to Britain

joining EMU." Asked if Vauxhall would produce vehicles elsewhere in Europe if Britain failed to enter he said: "For the European market, yes, given the choice."

Yesterday Vauxhall and GM were furiously back-peddling. Mr Reilly said: "A statement by a GM representative which indicated conceptual support for the UK entering into the EMU was misinterpreted to imply that GM would withdraw from the UK if the UK did not go into EMU."

On the contrary, he said GM had been a significant investor here since 1925 and

had just completed a £300m investment in the new Astra at its Ellesmere Port plant on Merseyside. "That is evidence that GM intends to remain a significant producer in the years to come," he said.

There is no doubt, however, that the vast majority of big businesses favour early entry into a single currency and are building up pressure on the Government to make such a commitment encouraged by signs that the Cabinet is shifting to a pro-EMU position. After a four-month consultation with members, the Confederation of British

Industry announced in July that it supported EMU membership when the conditions were right. Last month, the CBI's director general, Adair Turner, reinforced this, saying that it would favour a clear statement from the Government in favour of the principle of joining EMU.

The Government is expected to set out its position on EMU by the end of the year but has always said a decision on whether to enter and when would be based on the economic merits, not political considerations.

Outlook, page 23

## GTE on brink of launching bid for MCI

British Telecom's remaining hopes of completing its merger with MCI, the US long-distance giant, looked to have evaporated last night when a second rival bidder, GTE, apparently threw its hat into the bidding ring. Chris Godsmark, Business Correspondent, examines the latest blow to BT's international ambitions.

A bidding war was fast developing for MCI last night as GTE, one of the largest phone companies in the US, looked set to launch a \$27bn (£17bn) all-cash offer for the company. MCI shares were suspended as traders waited for GTE to confirm or deny that it was about to strike with a new bid, priced below the surprise \$30bn offer launched this month by WorldCom. GTE's shares were also suspended.

Though the precise scale of GTE's potential offer was unclear, it was expected to value MCI shares at up to \$38, below the \$41.50 price of WorldCom's approach. The fact that GTE was apparently prepared to pay MCI shareholders entirely in cash would almost certainly scupper the bids by BT and WorldCom.

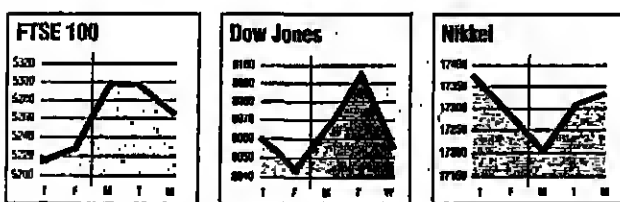
WorldCom was offering to pay MCI shareholders entirely in shares, while BT's revised offer was a mixture of cash and shares. MCI's board has been considering WorldCom's approach, but was expected to take several more days before deciding whether to recommend it to shareholders. BT executives declined to comment.

"We've heard the rumours but until such time as GTE launch a formal bid we can't say anything," said a spokesman.

Jim Ross, a telecommunications analyst with stockbrokers Hoare Govett, said: "This certainly makes things much more complex for BT because they've told their shareholders MCI is worth much less than this."

However there was speculation last night that a bid by GTE, based in Stamford, Connecticut, could work to BT's advantage. GTE is almost four times the size of WorldCom in terms of its sales and analysts suggested it could make a better US partner for BT.

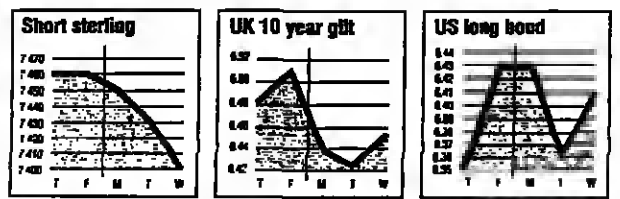
### STOCK MARKETS



\*Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5263.70	-35.20	-0.66	5390.80	3900.40	3.31
FTSE 250	4938.80	-9.00	-0.16	4943.80	4348.10	3.26
FTSE 350	2534.30	-14.50	-0.57	2553.30	1949.20	3.29
FTSE All Share	2475.38	-13.08	-0.53	2492.41	1925.79	3.28
FTSE SmallCap	2393.7	2.50	0.11	2391.10	2128.40	3.05
FTSE MicroCap	1310.2	1.00	0.08	1348.50	1136.70	3.50
FTSE AIM	1009.4	-0.80	-0.08	1138.00	1093.30	0.96
Dow Jones	8054.30	-33.15	-0.41	8269.31	5872.73	1.65
Nikkei	17331.37	24.98	0.14	21812.30	17204.70	0.83
Hong Kong	13384.24	-452.32	-3.27	16673.27	12065.17	3.11
Dax	4193.09	-8.68	-0.21	4438.93	2659.25	1.90

### INTEREST RATES



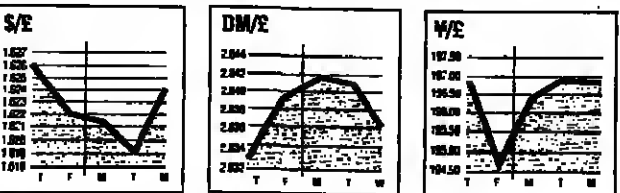
Money Market Rates

Index	3 month	1 yr	1 yr 6m	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK	7.35	7.35	7.62	7.80	8.00	8.25	8.50
US	5.75	5.75	6.03	6.19	6.12	6.43	6.41
Japan	0.53	0.53	0.58	0.65	0.79	0.87	0.80
Germany	3.60	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05

### MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls
Peel Hides 727.50 80.00 8.93	Berkley G 693.00 -35.50 -4.80
Hammors 244.50 11.00 4.93	Tarmac 121.50 -6.00 -4.31
Wessex W 517.50 22.00 4.44	BNL Biotech 115.00 -5.00 -4.17
Capita G 290.50 11.00 3.88	North Foods 233.5 -3.5 -1.51

### CURRENCIES



Pound	Dollar	Yen
Dollar 1.6242 +0.486 1.5840	Yen 0.6157 -0.176 0.6318	
D-Mark 2.8376 -0.489 2.4480	D-Mark 1.7470 -0.730 1.5403	
Yen 186.53 +0.02 178.27	Yen 121.25 -0.33 112.24	
E index 100.30 +0.10 88.80	S index 106.00 -0.10 87.80	

### OTHER INDICATORS

at 5pm	Change	at 5pm	Change	at 5pm	Change
Brent Oil (\$)	18.45 -0.02	24.15	GDP	112.80	3.50 109.0 24-Oct
Gold (\$)	326.65 -1.00	381.25	RPI	158.30	3.6 153.78 07-Oct
Silver (\$)	4.99 -0.14	5.02	Base Rates	7.00	5.75

www.bloomberg.com source: Bloomberg

## WH Smith board considers revised proposals from Waterstone

The WH Smith board met yesterday to discuss the revised restructuring proposals of Tim Waterstone, the bookselling entrepreneur. The new terms involve lower debt levels and reduced bankers' fees, while the existing chief executive would remain in place. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, reports.

The details of Mr Waterstone's revised proposals were issued by WH Smith yesterday after it was forced to make a statement by the Takeover Panel which now deems the struggling retailer to be in a takeover situation.

However, the terms included a clause which stated that the proposals would proceed only if recommended by the WH Smith board. This leaves the door open to the Waterstone team to launch a bid for the

group if the Smith board decides to snub Mr Waterstone a second time.

Nick Bubb, an analyst with Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, said: "It is a better set of proposals but it still looks a long shot that it will get the board's backing. But Waterstone may well go over their heads to the shareholders."

Mr Bubb said it was possible that a hostile bid could prove successful.

WH Smith executives will meet some of its institutional shareholders today and tomorrow amid growing feelings that the Waterstone proposals should be put to all shareholders. Some believe that it would be arrogant of the board to reject the proposals ahead of the group's annual meeting next Wednesday.

The terms of the Waterstone proposals were put to Jeremy Hardie, the WH Smith chairman, and Richard Handover, its chief executive, yesterday afternoon by Mr Waterstone and Ian Martin, the Unigate chairman.

Under the revised deal, WH Smith shareholders would receive a payout of 150p-200p per share rather than the 200p originally proposed.

This would reduce the gearing of the new leveraged Smith's from over 80 per cent under the original terms, to around 60 per cent.

A further payment may be made to shareholders following the possible sale of some parts of the business. These could include the Virgin Our Price music chain and the US business. It would report on these disposals by the end of March.

Another key difference in the new plan is that Mr Handover would retain his position as chief executive. Tim Waterstone would be executive deputy chairman with Mr Martin as chairman. There would be no place on the board for current chairman Jeremy Hardie. The changes were viewed as a way of getting Mr Handover "on side" to help achieve the board's approval.

A strategy committee consisting of Mr Martin, Mr Water-

stone, Mr Handover and Keith Hammill, the group's finance director, would be in charge of the new group's future direction and disposals.

Mr Waterstone would be in charge of repositioning the core WH Smith retail format with a new brand WH Smith Metro. This would be rolled out to 370 stores over three years. They would concentrate on authoritative offerings in books, stationery and news.

The Swindon warehouse would be closed while 10 of the larger Smith branches would be converted to Waterstone megastores along the lines of the new outlet in Glasgow.

Under the new plans, the new holding company would acquire Daisy & Tom, Mr Waterstone's childrens store, for £9.7m with additional payments dependent on performance.

The new plans also see the up-front expenses of the fees limited to £15m. SBC Warburg, Mr Waterstone's backers, would accept part of its fees in performance warrants.

Outlook, page 23.

## Hambros investors expect break-up announcement

Investors in Hambros yesterday believed the banking, insurance and estate agency group was preparing to break itself up to enhance shareholder value despite the company's insistence that press reports were "pure speculation". Hambros shares rose 12.5p to 246p as dealers focused on estimates that the group could be worth considerably more in separate pieces than as a whole.

A spokesman refused to comment on forecasts that it would reveal preliminary details of its plans when it announced half-year figures next month. City sources said Hambros was understood to have employed Schroders to help it put together break-up proposals.

Splitting the group up would mark another step in Hambros' deteriorating fortunes. Its reputation took a severe blow when it advised Andrew Regan in his failed attempt to take over the Co-Operative Wholesale Society earlier this year and it was criticised recently for its rejection of a bid for Hambro Insurance Services, in which it holds a controlling 52 per cent stake.

The bid from Fisher In-

ternational was pitched at 128p a share but since its rejection the price has fallen below 100p. That has irritated shareholders in Hambros, including Regent Pacific, the Hong Kong-based fund headed by Jim Mellon, which owns 3.5 per cent of the group.

William Phillips, a director of Regent, said yesterday: "Many shareholders, including ourselves, would like to see a break-up and would welcome it. Hambros suffers from a conglomerate discount."

He said Regent had been disappointed that Hambros had rejected the approach from Fisher International.

Regent has been lobbying Hambros to break itself up for some time and believes the group could be worth as much as 350p a share.

Hambros shares have underperformed the market by almost 35 per cent in the past year and have dropped from a peak of 458p in 1994.

Since January this year they have slipped from a high of 268p at a time when the banking sector has performed strongly.

— Tom Stevenson

## Guinness and GrandMet clear the Brussels hurdle

Guinness and Grand Metropolitan yesterday cleared one of the biggest hurdles in their bid to create the biggest drinks company in the world by agreeing to European Commission demands to dispose of two whisky brands. Andrew Yates finds that the drinks groups appear to have got off lightly.

The European Commission yesterday gave the green light to the £24bn merger between Guinness and GrandMet but forced the UK drinks companies to dispose of one of their main European whisky brands.

Guinness and GrandMet, to be called GMG Brands, has agreed to EC demands to sell its Dewar's brand in

Europe within 15 months to satisfy concerns that it would have a dominant position in the Spanish and Greek whisky markets.

The move has fuelled speculation that the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which is also investigating the deal, may also call on GMG to sell Dewar's in the US. The FTC is also likely next week to sanction the merger subject to concessions, according to industry sources.

One drinks analyst said: "It is highly unlikely that the US would refuse to sanction the deal after the EC has waived it through."

GMG has also been called on to dispose of Ainslie, one of the smaller whisky brands in its portfolio, popular in Belgium and Luxembourg, and sell some distribution interests in Ireland.

Analysts believe the European disposals will cost GMG around £10m a year in profits. However if the drinks



Guinness's Tony Greener: 'A substantial step forward'

group is forced to dispose of Dewar's in the US it could hit profits by £30m.

That said, GMG could raise more than £500m from the sale of the Dewar's brand around the world. Allied

Domecq, Highland Distilleries and Seagram, the Canadian drinks giant, are likely bidders.

GMG is thought to have had to give up more than it originally thought. The drinks group had proposed selling a collection of secondary brands including VAT69 and White Horse as well as Ainslie, according to sources close to Brussels. But the EC is believed to have demanded greater concessions after rivals lobbied for more important brands to be sold.

Dewar's is the best selling whisky in the US, ahead of GMG's other brands such as Johnnie Walker and J&B. It is also the third biggest seller in markets such as Spain and Greece. Guinness sells 2.7 million cases of Dewar's around the world.

However most analysts believe that the EC could have demanded much greater concessions. One analyst said: "GMG has to get off rel-

atively lightly. The group must be very relieved."

Clearance from the EC comes just days after GMG patched up its differences with Bernard Arnault, the head of French luxury goods group LVMH, who had been the merger's most vociferous opponent. Mr Arnault has now agreed in back the deal and set up distribution agreements with GMG in return for £250m in cash.

George Bull, chairman of GrandMet and Guinness's chairman, Tony Greener, said in a joint statement yesterday: "We are pleased that we were able to put forward proposals that met the approval of the Commission. The regulatory approval in Europe is a substantial step forward to achieve the creation of GMG Brands."

Investors reacted favourably to the news, pushing GrandMet's shares 16p higher to 625p and Guinness by 17p to 625p.

مكتبة من الأدب



ماذا من الأمل

## What's good for GM may not be best for Britain



**OUTLOOK**  
ON ATTITUDES TO  
MONETARY UNION.  
THE WH SMITH  
PROPOSALS AND THE  
NEW BID FOR MCI

Big business is in pro-monetary union mode once more. Dr Mustafa Mohatarem, chief economist at General Motors, may not have gone so far as some reports suggested and said outright that GM would withdraw from Britain if we don't join the single currency, but he might well have done. His comments the other day on Radio 4 could hardly have been more pro-EMU.

In itself there is nothing particularly startling or new in this. It is the sort of thing that the CBI, some of its larger corporate members, and Britain's burgeoning band of inward investors, have been saying for some years now. The latest round of pro-EMU noise from big business is nonetheless being given an added piquancy because of the general view that the new Labour Government is warming to the single currency and might want to take us in at the earliest opportunity.

Given that the electorate, according to the opinion polls, is still strongly sceptical about monetary union, it plainly helps in the softening up process if business starts to warn of dire consequences if we don't join. It is probably too conspiratorial to believe that Gordon Brown and others are deliberately pushing business into making such comments. Dr Mohatarem doesn't even live in Britain and it seems doubtful that he has met either Tony Blair or Mr Brown. But certainly it is sometimes hard to tell just who is manipulating whom. Is it big business trying to push the Government towards

monetary union or is the Government enjoining business in the cause in the hope that if enough authoritative voices back the single currency then eventually it might win a referendum on the issue?

The probable answer is that what we are seeing here is a meeting of minds. The single currency suits the big multinationals, who see in it an opportunity to cement Britain's part in the single European market and enhance their power, profits and influence. And it suits inward investors, who fear that if Britain is not wholly a part of Europe, then they might be disadvantaged in lucrative export markets. Mr Brown, at least, seems to have bought these arguments, even if Mr Blair is for the time being keeping his counsel.

It is worth recalling here that the CBI and some of our major companies took a very similar view of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. We have to be a part of it, we must be a part of it, they told the Government and eventually even Mrs Thatcher caved in.

Within a year or two, struggling under the weight of unacceptably high interest and exchange rates on top of an already deep recession, they were just begging to be let out. It took that nice Mr Soros finally to force what the politicians seemed incapable of accepting - a high devaluation.

If we scrapped the pound completely, there would be no such second chances. We would be locked into what-

ever the European Central Bank wanted to visit on us.

So in listening to what big business has to say on monetary union, the Government needs to be very aware of the possibility that this may be no more than clever special pleading. It would obviously be beneficial for big multinationals like Unilever and BP to be part of it, whatever the economic consequences of the single currency for Britain. These are as much Continental as British companies. For them, the more integrated Europe becomes as a market place, the better. It is not entirely clear that the same is true for the corner shop owner, or any other small businessman serving a more localised economic environment.

Big business has set the economic agenda wrongly once before. The Government should be very careful that it doesn't happen again. It may be that Dr Mohatarem is right about the single currency, but the Government should not be standing in awe of what these people are saying. The issue is a rather wider one than the level of GM's profits and the ease with which it is able to do business.

### Plan B for Smiths is not much better

Tim Waterstone has returned with Plan B for his putative takeover of WH Smith.

Under the proposals sketched out yesterday, the debt levels will be lower, there is a far more realistic valuation of his Daisy & Tom business, which now appears to be worth only a quarter of its value a fortnight ago and the advisers fees will be lower. Mr Waterstone is also proposing to tinker with the boardroom structure so that instead of installing himself as chief executive over the head of Richard Handover, he would become deputy chairman with Mr Handover staying put.

However, for all the rearranging of the deck chairs, Plan B is not a decisive improvement on his first stab at a leveraged takeover. Smiths shareholders are still being bribed with their own money and asked to put their faith in a much more highly geared vehicle. Nor does it look likely that the incumbent management will settle down to a life of harmonious co-existence with the man who was trying to snatch their company from under them a few days ago.

If Mr Waterstone's ideas of a capital repayment coupled with a break up of the business are so attractive to shareholders, then why doesn't the existing management implement them and dispense with the fancy fees that SBC Warburg will ring up?

Smith's probably has a duty to put the Waterstone proposals to its annual meeting next Wednesday and let shareholders have their say. Having missed his opportunity to strike when the ship was rudderless, the most galling thing for Mr

Waterstone would be either to see the incumbent management copy his ideas or discover that he had spurred them into action. That, however, if often the fate of the interloper.

### Maybe Sir Iain was right about MCI

Then there were three. A month ago MCI was a pariah company and British Telecom was being widely condemned for wanting to buy it at all, even at the devalued price eventually negotiated. In short order MCI has now attracted two rival bids, the latest an all-cash offer from GTE, one of the US's biggest local phone operators.

BT may have stood an outside chance against WorldCom, whose offer was made in hyper-inflated stock. But this latest bid is all cash. Bar regulatory interference, it is hard to see how BT can fight it.

There are bigger cost savings available to both US bidders than BT, as an outsider, could ever have achieved. Even so, the fact that MCI is now so much in demand from others in the industry does rather vindicate BT's much criticised strategy. It is just about possible for one telecoms company wrongly to identify MCI as a good takeover target - but three of them? It looks as if the City may have to send Sir Iain Valance an apology.

## US sales figures send shares lower on inflation fears

The number of people out of work in Britain has fallen to its lowest level for years, and some experts fear a new wage-price spiral. But the financial markets are more worried about the risk of higher inflation and interest rates on the other side of the Atlantic, writes Dione Coyle, Economics Editor.

market on the economy, and also about the danger that wage growth might pick up. The drop of 27,800 in the number of claimants during September took the headline unemployment rate down to 5.2 per cent, or 1,467,600 people.

Figures based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), considered to be a more complete picture of the state of the jobs market, showed a drop of 40,000 in the number looking for work during June to August. On this measure unemployment returned to its lowest level since early 1990, at 1,997,000 people, or 7.1 per cent.

The decline in unemployment on this basis is much smaller than the headline change because strong employment growth has brought many people who had dropped out back into the jobs market. The survey shows that during the year to August employment climbed by 439,000, knocking 258,000 off unemployment and bringing 181,000 people who had become "economically inactive" back into the workforce. Although both sets of figures showed that the jobs market has tightened, the growth in average earnings in the year to August remained at 4.5 per cent.

Economists were sharply divided about how to interpret yesterday's batch of figures. Some focused on the continuing fall in the jobless rate and

rising vacancies. The number of unfilled vacancies at Jobcentres reached a record level of just under 301,000 in September. Others, however, drew comfort from the steady earnings growth and the fact that the decline in unemployment might be slowing. According to the survey figures, the 40,000 decline in the number looking for work in the latest three months compares with a 75,000 drop in the previous quarter.

The possibility that the tighter jobs market might lead to high wage inflation was one of the concerns expressed by the Monetary Policy Committee. Although the committee voted unanimously not to raise interest rates, and also left rates unchanged at its October meeting, many City analysts expect an increase next month.

Kevin Darlington at ABN-Amro said: "It would not take much to push the Bank past the 'critical point'. Figures next week for third-quarter GDP growth would be key to the decision."

On the other hand, Eric Fishwick of Nikko Europe predicted borrowing costs would not rise again this year. "It is obvious that the Bank has its finger on the trigger but feels there is no need to shoot just yet."

Separately, figures for retail sales in the US showed a steady increase in September rather than the decline most analysts had expected.

## Part of the Post Office may be put up for sale

The outcome of the Government's review into the Post Office is set to emerge soon amid indications that ministers will sanction a public-private partnership as the answer to its calls for commercial freedom. Michael Harrison reports.

Michael Heron, the Post Office chairman, and his chief executive, John Roberts, have been

called to a meeting with the Industry Minister, Ian McCartney, in two weeks' time to be told how the Government intends to free the organisation up.

The Government appears to have ruled out a sale of a majority stake in the Post Office. But the prospect of a partial sale, allowing the private sector to take a stake of up to 49 per cent in the business, looks possible.

Mr Heron said yesterday that the ownership of the Post Office was a matter for the Government but he would not object to a solution that left 51

per cent in public hands and allowed the remainder to be sold. An announcement about exactly what form of commercial freedom it will be allowed and the degree of private funding is expected around Christmas.

The priority for the Post Office is to be released from the constraints of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement which prevent it from borrowing on the open market to develop commercial ventures.

Mr Roberts said that unless it was removed from the stranglehold of the PSBR then any

other changes to the Post Office would amount to little more than "cosmetics around the edges".

The Post Office's contribution to the Exchequer last year reached £500m, including taxes and the "dividend" it pays from profits through the PSBR. Mr Heron said that using the Post Office as a cash cow was no basis on which to run a commercial competitive business.

Commercial freedom would allow the Post Office to set up joint ventures with private operators and even take them over - the privatised Dutch Post Of-

fice bought TNT earlier this year.

Meanwhile the Post Office has warned that many businesses, including its own, may not be able to cope with the millennium timebomb and a switch to a single currency at the same time.

Mr Roberts said the Post Office was spending £60m to get its computers ready for the date change in 2000. If it had to prepare for EMU at the same time, a changeover that would require huge retraining of counters staff, then it might be overwhelmed.

### SIB increases payout limit to £200m

The Securities and Investments Board (SIB), the City's leading regulator, is taking action to avert a crisis that could prevent thousands of victims of pension mis-selling from receiving compensation of up to £10,000 each.

SIB yesterday warned that a £100m annual limit on compensation payouts, made under the Investors Compensation Scheme, could be breached because of the mounting cost of redressing mis-selling victims of firms that have become defunct. Under the compensation scheme's rules, payouts are halted if the £100m limit is exceeded. This would leave thousands of mis-selling victims with no means of redress.

The SIB yesterday tabled proposals to double the annual limit to £200m. The new limit would apply only to those victims of defunct firms who came under the remit of the Personal Investment Authority (PIA).

In a consultation paper, the SIB is also proposing a safety clause in case the new £200m limit is also breached. The safety clause would allow part of any particular year's compensation bill to be carried over to the next year.

Andrew Winkler, the SIB's chief executive, said: "The current proposals are being made as a precautionary measure in the interests of investor protection. It is prudent that we make timely provision to accommodate pensions claims."

Behind the proposals is a fear that the bill for mis-selling by 4,700 now-defunct firms may well exceed £100m. So far, the regulators have identified 10,000 cases of mis-selling by defunct firms.

Many more victims have still to be contacted. Despite letters from the PIA, less than half of the 295,000 people who were sold pensions by the defunct firms have responded.

The PIA is also seeking to contact 33,000 people who have changed address. They can call the PIA on 0171 417 7001.

—Andrew Verity

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## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY SAMEENA AHMAD

### Redlands needs white knights

What would Redland be worth in a break up? Lafarge, the French group, is offering 320p cash for its building materials rival. Rudolph Agnew, Redland's chairman and a veteran of hostile takeovers, is arguing that there is greater value in Redland's assets than that.

To prove it he may need to find white knights either to buy the whole group or, more likely, to buy its aggregates and roofing divisions separately.

How much could these pieces fetch? Taking aggregates first, on a typical take-out multiple of 11 times forecast operating profits for 1997 of £90m, the UK and US aggregates businesses are worth £990m. On top of that add roughly another £150m to reflect the assets of French aggregates, though currently loss-making. That gives a total value for aggregates of £1.14bn. However the scarcity of holes in the ground worldwide means Redland aggregate might actually fetch closer to their current book value at the half year of £1.25bn at constant exchange rates.

On the other side is RBB, Redland's roof tile business, an undoubted world leader despite the hit from Germany's weak economy. RBB can probably command at least 16 times forecast after-tax earnings of £80m, or £1.3bn in total. The snag is that Redland only owns 56.5 per cent of RBB, so its stake is worth just over £800m, adjusting for RBB's own £100m of debt this year.

Add up the two and subtract Redland's £420m group debt and you are left with just over £1.65bn, or 317p a share. That excludes the tiny and loss-making Asian business. The end result is almost exactly the value of Lafarge's initial bid.

However this business has been badly managed and any bidder would expect to reap synergies and possibly tax benefits. Cost savings of some £20m would imply at least another 20p to 30p a share on the offer price. A second bidder emerging would add more. Certainly Redland's share price, up another 1.5p

### Smiths Industries: At a glance

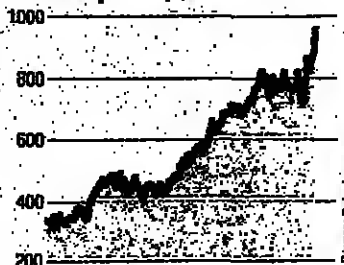
Market value: £2.9bn, share price 942.5p (-33p)

Five-year record	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turnover (£m)	726	756	899	1008	1076
Pre-tax profits (£m)	105	118	138	170.4	191.6
Earnings per share (p)	23.8	26.7	31.3	38.9	43.2
Dividends per share (p)	11.85	13.0	14.4	16.2	17.85

#### Operating profits, £m

	1997 Margin	1996 Margin
Aerospace	59.3 14%	45.3 12%
Medical Systems	74.7 24%	73.1 24%
Industrial	60.6 17%	49.7 15%

#### Share price, pence



to 340p yesterday, reflects expectations of a higher offer.

There may be no bonanza of hidden value for Mr Agnew to unlock.

But even another 20p is worth hanging on for.

### Smiths a victim of its success

Smiths Industries has done it again. Shuffling off a £12m currency hit and reshuffle of its top management team, it unveiled another impressive set of results. Underlying earnings rose 16 per cent to £192m for the year to August and dividends were one-tenth up at 17.9p, the 27th year in a row it has increased pay-outs.

Smiths benefitted from the upturn in the aerospace market which followed a sharp pick-up in aircraft orders on the back of booming airline passenger numbers. Its defence order book also looks assured. Future profits should be bolstered by Smiths' US contract to supply planes for its new fleet of air-

craft carriers. It is also in line for hundreds of millions of pounds of work from the Eurofighter project, which is finally getting off the ground.

Not that the company depends on aerospace. Its industrial division has proved a solid performer. And Graseby, the latest £136m addition to its medical division, looks like a great buy.

However, despite the good news, Smiths shares fell 33p to 942.5p.

The company has become a victim of its own success. Smiths' margins are already very healthy and there is little scope for significant improvement. And it can no longer rely on small acquisitions making a significant impact on its share price, however good the deal. Investors are now expecting a big purchase and the absence of a deal with these results explains the market's disappointment.

Smiths certainly has the financial firepower to make a significant purchase and is eyeing up plenty of targets, including a chunk of BOC's Ohmeda medical business. However, as deals get bigger, they usually become more expensive.

Smiths now has to prove it can grow

its top line as reliably as it has been able to build up margins.

NatWest forecasts current year profits of £209.1m, putting the shares on a prospective ratio of 20. Hold.

### Tie Rack takes a currency hit

It has been a tough few months for Tie Rack, the specialist retailer run by the ever-exuberant Roy Bishko. From a recent high of 203.5p in April the shares have been drifting down steadily as fears over the impact of the strong pound begin to take root.

Yesterday the shares fell a further 4.5p to 127p as the company confirmed the currency damage to its half-year results. Though underlying profits were up on the same period last year, the pre-tax figure in the six months to 17 August slumped from £604,000 to just £158,000. The currency hit to profit translation was £500,000.

Then there was uncertainty caused by the surprise management changes which will see Nigel McGinley step down as chief executive to be replaced by two joint managing directors who have been promoted internally.

At the trading level, like-for-like sales were more or less flat in the first half and similar in current trading. The new joint venture in Japan broke even and the Knot Shop acquisition in the US offers the group the opportunity to sell branded ties in that format while concentrating on own-label in Tie Rack.

A programme to refurbish the 419-strong store portfolio is set to start though the company declined to put a cost on it yesterday. The company may also expand the Knot Shop format overseas. On expected full-year profits of £8.8m, Tie Rack shares trade on a forward multiple of 12. Quite cheap for a well-managed company, though one increasingly dominated by Mr Bishko. Much depends on the future strength of sterling and how the new management team can prove themselves. Worth holding.

## IN BRIEF

### ITV companies warned on licence commitments

Sir Robin Biggam, chairman of the Independent Television Commission, last night warned ITV companies that regional programming commitments were "non-negotiable" during the process of licence renewal which starts next year. In a speech before the ITC's monthly meeting, Sir Robin said: "We are ... talking about licence renewal, not licence renegotiation. Companies can not tear up existing licence commitments and start again with a clean sheet." ITV companies would be held to promises about regional programming, regardless of the rapid consolidation of the 15 ITV regions into the hands of four major players, Sir Robin said.

### BNFL in merger talks

British Nuclear Fuels and Siemens, the German electrical engineering giant, are in talks to merge their nuclear fuel supply businesses in a move which would create a company with sales of more than £900m. Graham Watts, BNFL's commercial director, warned the merger would involve some job losses, but said the number would be limited. "There are additional cost reductions from this merger from eliminating duplication," he said. BNFL, the state-owned reprocessing group, employs 2,300 staff near Preston in its fuel division, which supplies nuclear fuel to British Energy and Magnox Electric. Siemens' business is larger, employing 4,100 people.

### Changes at Hongkong Telecom

Cable & Wireless yesterday announced management changes at Hongkong Telecom, its lucrative subsidiary, but disappointed investors by failing to reveal a long-awaited deal with China Telecom to give the group greater access to the vast Chinese phone market. Dick Brown, C&W's chief executive, is to become chairman of Hongkong Telecom, replacing Brian Smith, who is also C&W chairman. Li Ping, chief operating officer of China Telecom (Hong Kong), is to join the Hongkong Telecom board as a non-executive director. C&W shares fell 14p to 545.5p after the company dashed hopes that it would reveal a deal to buy a stake in China Telecom.

### Calor Gas reduces stake

The shake-out in the domestic gas market continued yesterday when Calor Gas announced a partial withdrawal from Calortex, its loss-making joint venture with Texaco. Calor's Dutch parent group, SHV, is reducing its stake in Calortex from 50 per cent to 16.7 per cent in a deal which will see Nuon, a large multi-utility company in the Netherlands, take a 33.3 per cent share in the company.

### Ad agency buys Craik Jones

Abbott Mead Vickers, the advertising agency, yesterday agreed to buy the direct marketing specialist Craik Jones Watson Mitchell Voelkel for up to £12m. Peter Mead, Abbott Mead's chairman, said he had been talking to Craik Jones for around a year.

### Power station closures to be reviewed

The electricity industry regulator yesterday dealt an unexpected blow to National Power and PowerGen when he launched a review of their recent decisions to close part of three coal-fired power stations.

Professor Stephen Littlechild warned that the moves to reduce coal-fired generating capacity, which would take effect from next April, could drive up wholesale power prices. The review, by an independent consultant, would look at whether the two companies should offer generating capacity for sale to outside bidders.

The probe represents a boost for RJB Mining, the UK's leading coal producer, which has highlighted the risk to mining jobs from the reduction in coal-fired generating plants and the rise of gas generation. RJB had urged the privatised generators to offer parts of their power stations to other operators in the hope that it would maintain demand for coal.

The investigation will focus on National Power's closure of a generating unit at Willington power station in Derbyshire and the mothballing of two units at a large station at Tilbury in Essex, which burn imported coal. PowerGen's decision to shut one of four units at the Ferrybridge power station near Doncaster will also be examined.

A spokesman for National Power said the company was "continually approached" about selling generating capacity, but said it would be too difficult to sell or lease parts of existing stations. "We don't believe it's tenable for a competitor to own or lease part of a production unit which is located under the same roof with common services at a plant we continue to operate."

— Chris Godsmark

## Are you ready to meet the American Challenge?



October 15th, 1997: a famous day in European Luxury Motoring History. That is the day, at the London Motor Show, Hall 1, Cadillac will unveil the all-new Seville. And very shortly America's top selling luxury car will debut in England in right-hand drive version. It's all part of the American Challenge.

The new Cadillac Seville sets new standards in styling, technical innovation and performance. And offers more features (as standard) than any comparable car. This full list will impress you — as it will astound our most distinguished European competitors. The Cadillac Seville right-hand drive. Made in America, but designed for the United Kingdom. Are you ready to meet the American Challenge?

It's all happening at the London Motor Show, Hall 1. Should you not be able to join us on our show stand, call 0345 — 66 11 04.

We would be delighted to supply any further information on the all-new Cadillac Seville.

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## British Biotech's fall from grace continues as shares hit low

## MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN  
STOCK  
MARKET  
REPORTER  
OF THE YEAR

British Biotech, once the heart-throb of the fledgling drug developers, continues to fade away. The shares, in brisk trading, fell a further 5p to 115p, lowest for two years.

The group is now capitalised at £760m. In its halcyon days, with the shares rising at 326.5p, it just missed becoming a Footsie constituent.

The fall from grace started last year when its £143m rights issue achieved only a 49 per cent take up. Then came the departure of the finance director, James Noble.

The stock market's growing nervousness over the biotech companies added to BriBio's discomfort and last week's setback over a potential arthritis drug further undermined sentiment.

Because of side effects the treatment, developed with industry giant Glaxo Wellcome,

was abandoned. Although it is calculated the lost drug should be worth no more than 2p a share the price wilted because what could have been a lucrative relationship with Glaxo has been, at least for the time being, killed off.

BriBio's great white hope, of course, is Marimastat, a cancer drug which is said to represent 80p a share. But developing drugs is a tortuous slow process and, as is brutally clear, success can be an elusive commodity.

The rest of the market was under the spell of overseas influences. A slide in Hong Kong ensured a hesitant opening and a weak start in New York added to the gloom.

Then the Dow Jones Average recovered some of its lost ground, prompting Footsie to

recover some of its lost ground, prompting Footsie to

recover some of its lost ground, prompting Footsie to

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The FTSE SmallCap index, however, edged to another peak.

Takover yams continue to prop up some stocks. BIOC, the cable and construction group, was at one time 15p higher on speculation of a strike from Walsall or an Italian group. But the yarn was greeted with widespread scepticism and the shares ended with a 4p gain at 186.5p.

WE Smith fell 4.5p to 402p as the Tim Waterstone proposals appeared and Eham, the women's clothing chain, bounced 31p to 140.5p after it disclosed approaches which could lead to a change in control.

Great Universal Stores fell 3.5p to 712.5p after another presentation to analysts, this time involving its mail order division.

Bass, with Goldman Sachs

hanging a 940p target on the shares, fell 18.5p to 837.5p and BAT Industries was down 4p to 601p as Dresdner Kleinwort Benson alighted on a 650p suggested price and Salomon Brothers went to 700p.

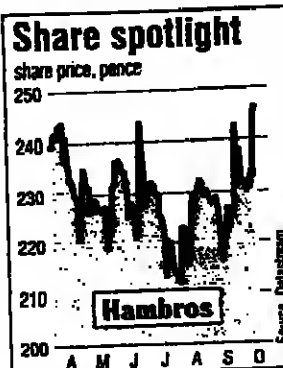
British Steel rose 3.75p to 186.5p with SBC Warburg signalling 220p.

Commercial Union lost a little of Tuesday's enthusiasm,

firming 1p to 865p. Latest story, the insurer could appear as the white knight for French group AGR, facing a hostile Italian bid.

Merchant bank Hambros rose 12.5p to 246p on break-up suggestions and the Hong Kong setback pulled HSBC and Standard Chartered down.

Cable & Wireless was another under the Hong Kong market influence. It also had to contend with disappointment after it failed to come up with details of any significant progress in China. The shares fell 14p to 545.5p.



Worries about third-quarter figures lowered Imperial Chemical Industries a further 3.5p to 956p but Thames Water enjoyed share buyback hopes, up 11p to 894.5p.

Grand Metropolitan and Guinness celebrated the Brussels clearance with the shares

firmly in tandem at 625p, GrandMet up 16p and Guinness 17p.

Allied Domecq, on the theory the giant merger cocktail will force it into a spirits alliance, hardened 7p to 522.5p.

Scottish Leader - put on 5.5p to 53p on continuing speculation of a reverse takeover by William Grant & Sons.

B&B Resources, a recruitment and training group, improved 7.5p to 142.5p. The company met institutional investors on Tuesday.

## TAKING STOCK

Shares of Coffee Republic, running half-a-dozen coffee bars in London, arrived at 22p after a reverse takeover of Arion Properties, a former Slater family vehicle. The company hopes to have 20 outlets within 15 months. Profits are unlikely for two years.

Solitaire, a property management group, placed at 148p closed at 182.5p. Metalair, a steel supplier, ended at 70.5p following an introduction.

Emerald Energy, seeking oil in Columbia, held at 5.25p. Mercury Asset Management has nudged its interest from 10.3 per cent to 10.62 per cent.

Display IT, once the Oxford waste stock, has had its share trading facility withdrawn.

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PER	Div	Div Yr
Alcoholic Beverages									
22 48	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 49	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 50	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 51	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 52	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 53	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 54	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 55	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 56	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 57	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 58	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 59	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 60	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 61	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 62	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 63	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 64	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 65	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 66	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 67	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 68	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 69	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 70	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PER	Div	Div Yr
Food Producers									
22 71	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 72	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 73	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 74	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 75	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 76	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 77	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 78	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 79	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 80	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 81	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 82	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 83	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 84	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 85	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 86	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 87	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 88	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 89	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 90	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PER	Div	Div Yr
Electronics									
22 91	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 92	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 93	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 94	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 95	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 96	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 97	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 98	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
22 99	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 00	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 01	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 02	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 03	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 04	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 05	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 06	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 07	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 08	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 09	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 10	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PER	Div	Div Yr
Engineering									
23 11	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 12	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 13	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 14	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 15	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 16	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 17	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 18	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 19	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 20	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 21	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 22	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 23	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 24	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 25	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 26	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 27	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 28	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 29	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
23 30	120.00	115.00	Adnoca	115.00	-0.50	115.00	1.00	0.00	0.00

52 week	High	Low	Stock	Price	Chg	YTD	PER	Div	Div Yr
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
17	100.00	95.00	Adnoca	95.00	-0.50	95.00	1.00	0.00	0.00
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# Ten years on, will the bull market end in another crash?

On Monday 19 October 1987, stock markets around the world crashed. As the 10th anniversary approaches, Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor, asks whether history will repeat itself.

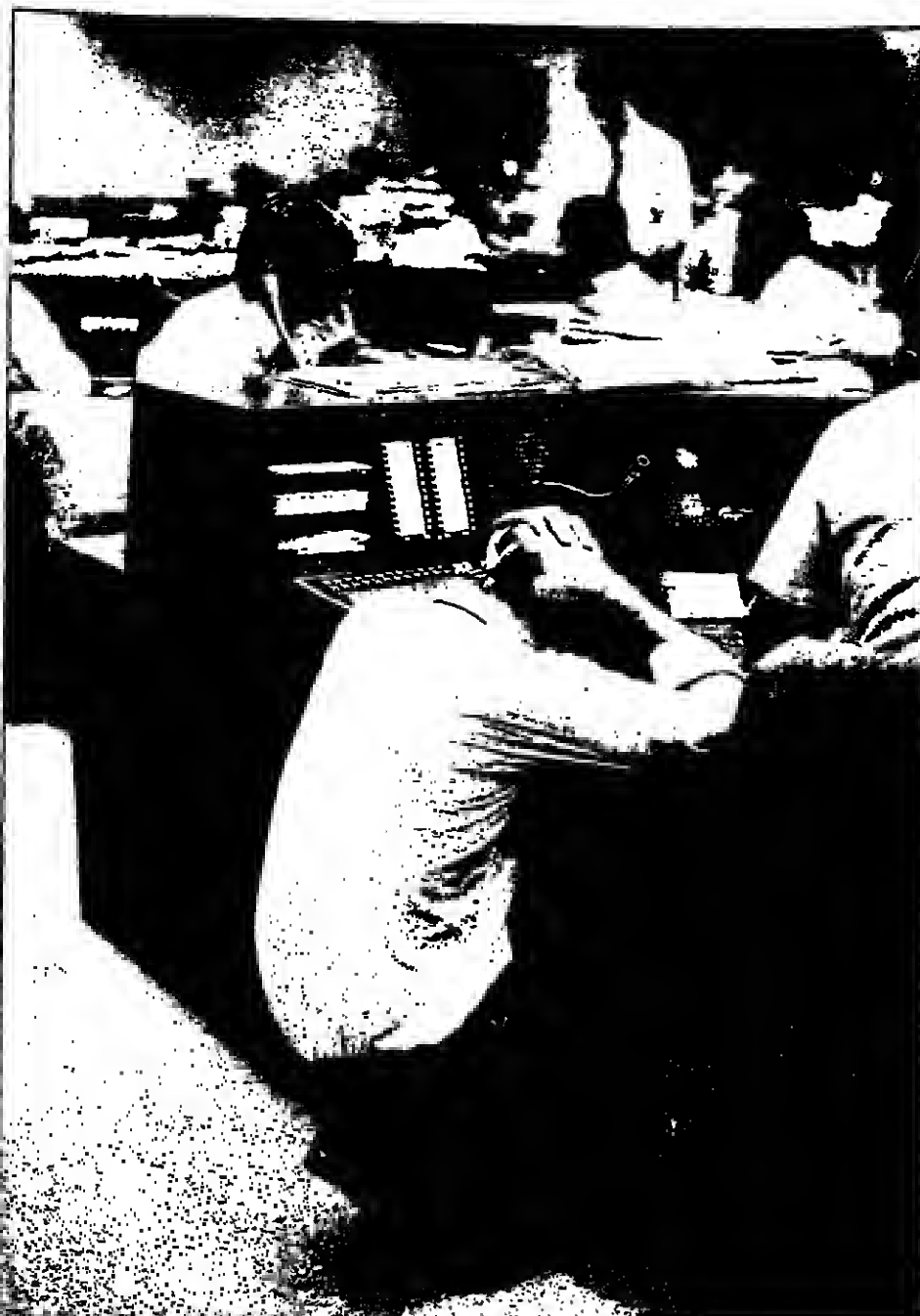
If you own shares or have a pension and you want a fright, look at the two charts on this page. They superimpose the current bull market on Wall Street on to its two most notorious predecessors, the speculative bubbles that ended so catastrophically in 1929 and 1987. The similarities are, to say the least, worrying.

If you believe that history repeats itself, it is time to run for cover from a crash that will destroy billions of pounds of savings and pensions and could wreak havoc in the real economy beyond the financial markets. History does not repeat itself, of course, either in the magnitude of events or their timing. Ask half a dozen City professionals what will happen to stock markets over the next year and you will get six different answers. That interplay between fear and greed, pessimism and optimism is what makes for a vibrant market.

But those raw emotions can blind otherwise rational people, as one famous investor, Joe Granville, noted: "Bear markets never come by appointment, ringing your front door by daylight hours. They come like a thief in the night, sneaking in the back door while the public sleeps the slumber of confidence."

If that is true, the growing bullishness on Wall Street should set alarm bells ringing. The ratio of calls to puts for S&P index options, as good a measure of stock market confidence as any, is showing a more worrying proportion of optimists about the future direction of the market to pessimists than at any time this decade.

That chimes with a cynical view of bull markets which sug-



It could all end in tears: There are plenty of reasons why a crash might happen soon, but there are equally plausible reasons why it might not. Photograph: Rex Features

gests that they always go through the same three phases. In the early stage of a stock market rise there is plenty of value around and professional investors pile into underpriced stocks, driving their value up.

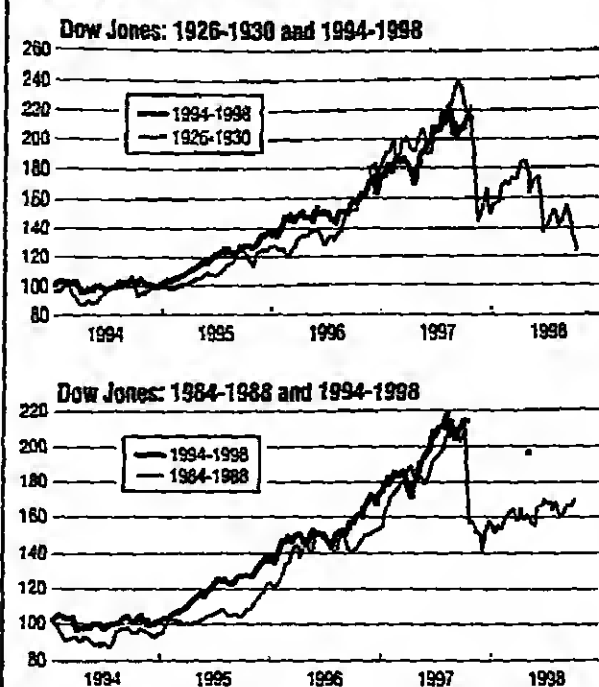
Once shares become overpriced on fundamental valuation models, the professionals

pull out in anticipation of a correction. It doesn't come, however, because private investors push shares higher. That makes fund managers nervous because they are missing out and they think of a way of getting back into the market without losing face.

They can't admit to their

trustees that they got it wrong when they withdrew from the market so they kid themselves it is different this time. The "new paradigm" is invented, usually a tenuous theory about low inflation and technological change, and the professionals return for a final orgy of speculation before it all ends in tears.

## Have we been here before?



We are almost certainly in the final stages of the current bull run. What is unclear is whether this one will end with a bang or a whimper. There are plenty of reasons why a crash might happen - the scale of the rise on Wall Street, rising interest rates, high valuations, a heavy trade deficit and tensions about the US/Japanese exchange rate. But there are equally plausible reasons why it won't.

Some shares are very highly rated, but strip out banks, oils and pharmaceuticals from the index and 1997 has actually been a rather disappointing year on the stock market. Exporters, affected by the strength of sterling, and pretty much any small company, have missed out on the FTSE 100's bonanza.

Although the market is as highly rated as it was in 1987, with shares trading on average at around 20 times earnings and dividend yields low, that is possibly justifiable when low inflation and so interest rates reduce the attractions of other financial assets. Another crucial difference is in the supply of new equity to the market. In 1987 companies were issuing new

shares like confetti, while this year there have been hardly any new issues or cash calls.

At the bottom end of the market, directors of companies are buying shares in their own businesses at a faster rate than at any time since the dark days of 1992, just before the pound fell out of the exchange rate mechanism. The prospect of a weaker pound and strengthening European export markets signals good profits growth for smaller exporters.

The way London tracks Wall Street means a fall in the US market will be impossible to shrug off here. But will it turn into a bear market like the slump between April 1972 and December 1974 when shares lost 70 per cent of their value?

Probably not. The crash of 1998 is likely to be a correction of between 10 and 20 per cent followed by fairly rapid recovery. But be warned. It is fashionable to dismiss talk of bear markets but one only has to look at Japan, where shares are still more than 50 per cent below their 1989 peak, to know that the wily bear is still out there. Waiting patiently.

## Fear of inflation was the final straw for Wall Street

If share prices fell today on the same scale as they did on Monday 19 October 1987, the Dow Jones index would shed about 1,800 points. The crash a decade ago on Sunday was, proportionately, twice as bad as the Great Crash of October 1929.

It did not hit London quite as severely. Although the stock market had been closed on Friday by the previous night's catastrophic storm, the FTSE 100 index fell by "only" 11 per cent on the Monday. But even that would correspond to a more than 550-point collapse today.

A biography of Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, reports that he flew to Dallas, Texas, on the Monday morning to give a speech. Arriving at the airport after the market had closed in the afternoon, he first misunderstood officials telling him the Dow had fallen by "five-to-eight" as a 5.08 drop, not 508 points, or 23 per cent. Three hundred points of the decline had occurred in the last hour of trading. The book, *Back from the Brink*, notes: "Oddly enough, Greenspan recalls he slumbered peacefully that night, getting his usual five hours of sleep."

Although the Monday was cataclysmic, the previous week had been bad enough. The index had fallen 95 points (a record) on Wednesday after the publication of the bad trade figures, 58 points on Thursday, and 108 points on Friday (another record).

One of the characteristics of the 1987 crash was the way the baton was passed from

market to market around the globe. After New York closed, Tokyo and Hong Kong recorded declines, and London followed suit the next morning. London kept it up on Tuesday 20 October, recording another 12 per cent drop.

A second feature was the way automatic "program trading" by arbitrageurs accelerated the fall in shares, which happened so rapidly that the NYSE's communications systems could not display up-to-date prices. The introduction of "circuit breakers" after a 50-point fall in the Dow should prevent a repeat, imposing pauses when the index is heading up or down too sharply.

With hindsight, all the conditions had been there for a stock market crash. Shares had risen very sharply, and were fairly widely regarded as overvalued. There was a clear imbalance in the US economy, which was manifested in the yawning trade deficit.

There was also severe tension between the American and German governments over the levels of their currencies. The Louvre Accord, agreed the previous spring, had halted the two-year fall in the dollar from its 1985 peak. But by the autumn the co-ordination seemed to be breaking down, and the Germans had raised interest rates earlier in October.

The final trigger was the fear of higher inflation. Sudden signs of wage and cost pressures took long-term bond yields higher, making equities look even more overvalued.

-Diane Coyle

## The market fed off its own statistics

There have been many corrections to stock market prices during my City career but only two crashes. The first came in 1974, the second in 1987. The former was more devastating economically.

Prices had already halved from their 1972 peak by the summer of 1974. They then halved again during the second half of that year. The financial viability of many City institutions was called in question. Shares became dramatically undervalued but confidence was slow to restore and, although prices rose in 1975, the economy and the market drifted sideways for five years.

The crash of 1987 was not as damaging but was more spec-

tacular. The speed of the price collapse was stunning. The fall in the New York stock market on 19 October 1987 was the largest one-day percentage change to stock prices since records began. Such unprecedented changes caused significant trading losses, but the viability of financial institutions was not threatened as in 1974.

Coming so close after Big Bang, which brought additional capital and greater competition to the London market, the financial effects were absorbed reasonably well.

It was an uncomfortable time but the London markets remained open when others imposed trading restrictions or closed down. New players in the

London scene were reluctant to answer their telephones. The spirit of the old London jobbing firms embodied by my new colleagues from Wedd Durie & Co. shone through. They continued making prices despite considerable uncertainty and the knowledge that significant trading losses had already been incurred.

Private client investors were nervous. The memories of 1974 were still vivid but some were new to the game, having been enticed by privatisation offerings and tax incentives (PEFs).

The institutional investors appeared to be ready to take advantage of prices more in line with fundamental values.

But my overriding memory was the way the market fed off

itself. There was less interest in the economic indicators than in the market statistics. The balcony overlooking BZW's dealing floor was crammed with representatives of the world's press. This was the first occasion after Big Bang when the City was headline news.

Our dealers became familiar faces as every news bulletin focused on the market's latest moves. The pictures of dealers looking at screens did not convey the tensions individuals were experiencing. For many dealers this was their first experience of a crash. If history is any guide it may not prove to be their only experience.

-Michael Hughes, Group Economic Adviser, BZW

## No need to panic, the City strategists say

There was little evidence of the panic 10 years ago in the City yesterday, where equity strategists were united in the belief that history was not about to repeat itself. "Are we in for a 1987 crash? My answer is unequivocally no," said Bob Sample of NatWest Markets. "This is not 1987," added Michael Hughes of BZW.

Chris Carter of UBS agreed, saying that the bank's global valuation model suggested a world-wide overvaluation of 10 per cent. "The same model generates a 35 per cent over-valuation for 1987," he said.

The strategists pointed to important differences. In 1987, according to UBS, inflation was rising and bond yields heading upwards, signs that markets should fall, whereas in 1997 the reverse is the case.

Another important factor is the supply of equities, which was far higher in 1987 than now. "In 1987, 66 per cent of turnovers were financed by paper, as opposed to around 15 per cent now," said Philip Wolstencroft of Merrill Lynch. Mr Hughes of BZW attributes at least some of the dramatic price response in 1987 to the fact that futures and options were then traded amongst a small group of professional traders. "Today there is a better balance in the market".

The City's experts think a substantial correction is more likely in the US than the UK. "The US is an accident waiting to happen," said Nick Knight of Nomura. The UK may well follow suit but any correction here is unlikely to be as dramatic.

-Lea Paterson

## WHAT THE EXPERTS PREDICT

	FTSE100 index	yr end 97	yr end 98
Bob Sample, Nat West Mkts	4800	4800	5700
Nick Knight, Nomura	4800	4800	5800
Philip Wolstencroft, Merrill Lynch	5300	5300	5800
Michael Hughes, BZW	-	-	5600
Mike Young, Goldman Sachs	-	-	5500
Chris Carter, UBS	-	-	5600

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## GOLF

# Montgomery clears the way to America

Ever in the news, Colin Montgomery has written to members of the US Ryder Cup team he criticised at Valderrama. Today, he leads Scotland in the Alfred Dunhill Cup, as Andy Farrell reports from St Andrews.

Before the golf, here are the day's list of denials: Mark James does not have a burning desire to be the Ryder Cup captain; Miguel Angel Martin is 100 per cent fit again and wants to forget the past; and Colin Montgomery regrets the comments which have fuelled such a furore in America.

There was a long list of "Any other business" on the agenda here yesterday. Montgomery's pre-tournament address to the press was prefaced with a written statement on which he would not entertain questions. Prior to the Ryder Cup, Montgomery was asked to justify his assertion that the American team was not as strong as many thought. What followed was an analysis of each of the US players, much of which was borne out by what happened at Valderrama.

Among the highlights were that Tiger Woods may win five points but could not win the Cup on his own; no one would be intimidated by playing Jeff Maggert; and that Brad Faxon does not hit the ball straight enough for Valderrama. Where Montgomery strayed too far was in saying that because of his di-

vorice, Faxon may not be mentally ready for the match.

By the time the comments were heavily quoted, misquoted and, in Montgomery's view, "twisted" on the other side of the Atlantic, matters had got out of hand. With the Scot likely to play full-time in the States next year things needed cooling down.

"My remarks did not come out as I intended and I regret this has occurred," Montgomery read. "I especially regret the personal nature of remarks about members of the US team. I have written to each person on the team who was named in the press and to captain Tom Kite and I have made special efforts to discuss the situation with Brad Faxon and I shall always be grateful to him and shall respect his understanding which, under the circumstances, has been so professional.

"It has been particularly disappointing to me that other parties not directly related to the situation have taken it upon themselves to comment so aggressively on uncorroborated and distorted reports."

This was a reference to remarks by US Tour players Fred Funk - "Monty is the jerk of the world" - and Bob Estes, who called him a "cry baby" and suggested no one would play practice rounds with the Scot.

But Faxon, who beat Montgomery at the World Match Play at Wentworth last week and is a member of the defending American Dunhill Cup side, came out in support. "I don't think Colin's words were misinterpreted," he said. Faxon also

said anyone cold-shouldering the Scot was worried about him taking dollars out of their pockets if he plays in America.

Martin did not want to rake over the even greater Ryder Cup controversy of his exclusion on fitness grounds. Today sees the Spaniard's first competitive round since the Open in July and although his left wrist is strapped, he does not need any more treatment or to exercise it.

Europe's Ryder Cup captaincy for 1999 is up for grabs, but though mentioned in dispatches, James is not doing the grabbing. He once said you would have to be "stark raving bonkers" to want the job. "It is a no-win situation," he said yesterday. "Even Seve has been criticised and he won the thing." But, the increasingly skilled political operator that he is, James added: "It is something that if it ever came along I'd have to think about at the time it was offered."

James leads an England team that includes Lee Westwood and Russell Claydon and has been drawn against favourites America, who consist of Faxon, Mark O'Meara and Justin Leonard. The toughest of the four groups - the round-robin system lasts three days while it takes as long for someone to work out who qualifies for the semi-finals and final on Sunday - is that containing Scotland, South Africa, Ireland and Germany.

ALFRED DUNHILL CUP DRAW (St Andrews, today until Sunday). Group One: United States, England, Argentina, Group Two: Australia, Sweden, France, Taiwan, Group Three: South Africa, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Group Four: Zimbabwe, Zealand, South Korea, Spain. Winners of each group qualify for semi-finals on Sunday. Group One v Group Two, Group Three v Group Four.

## BASEBALL

# Marlins quick to join big fish in ball pond

Kevin Brown pitched a complete game as the Florida Marlins became the quickest expansion team to reach the World Series by beating the defending champions, the Atlanta Braves, to win the National League Championship Series.

"We're there," said Florida's manager, Jim Leyland, after Tuesday's decisive 7-4 victory. "I told our club all along that I thought we were one club that could beat the Atlanta Braves."

The Marlins scored four times in the first inning against Tom Glavine and held on to win the series 4-2. Florida, who entered the league in 1993, eclipsed the mark of eight years set by the 1969 New York Mets for quickest expansion team to reach the World Series, doing it in its fifth season.

The upstart Marlins will face the winners of the American League Championship Series between the Cleveland Indians and Baltimore Orioles, with Games 1 and 2 of the World Series in Miami on Saturday and Sunday. Cleveland leads Baltimore 3-1.

Brown (2-0), scratched from one start and pushed back from another due to a viral infection, scattered 11 hits, but only three after the fourth inning. He walked one and struck out eight while throwing 140 pitches.

"This is not about me," said Brown, who persuaded Leyland to leave him in the game in the seventh inning when the manager was about to pull him. "What I had to do



Florida Marlins pitcher Kevin Brown (right) celebrates with team-mate Charles Johnson. Photograph: Reuters

is nothing compared to what this team has done all year long."

Leyland's Pittsburgh Pirates lost National League Championship Series to Cincinnati in 1990 and the Braves in 1991 and 1992. One of his top players with the Pirates was his current third baseman, Bobby Bonilla.

The pair wept together

on the field after the game. "It was a great deal of emotion," Bonilla said. "It took a long time to get here. I'm glad it was with Jim Leyland."

The Marlins were the National League wild card, finishing behind the Braves in the Eastern Division but beating them eight times in 12 games during the regular season.

## RUGBY UNION

# Woodward looks for new Guscott

Clive Woodward says he has the "skeleton" of his first England side in mind, but Jeremy Guscott's absence has deprived the coach of the backbone he badly wanted. Chris Hewett gauges the new regime's reaction to a serious body blow.

Gorgeous Gus was unusually up front about his injury situation yesterday; no evasion, no prevarication, no double talk. "I'm devastated," said England's midfield diamond. "When will we next see New Zealand, Australia and South Africa here over four consecutive weekends? I'd dearly love to play but realistically, I'm unavailable for selection."

That's that, then. Guscott's problem, a bulging disc in the lower back that prevents him from running at anything more than half pace, means Clive Woodward and his fellow selectors must reconsider their entire back-line strategy. Indeed, the coach owned up to as much before casting an educated eye over the remaining contenders during yesterday's training pow-wow at Bisham Abbey.

A fit Jerry Guscott at the top of his form would have been the side to play Australia next month and he'd have been picked at outside centre, which I regard as a key position if you're looking to play the game a certain way," he admitted. "We now have to reassess whether we can play the same game we were planning, whether there is some-

one like Jerry who can cope with the same sorts of demands. I'm not going to lose any sleep over it, though; this could have happened a couple of days before a Test or midway through a World Cup campaign."

All of which impacted on Woodward's earlier admission that he would be quite prepared to play the odd player out of position - or, at least, in a role other than the one he might perform at club level. "Nothing is out of the question. It's not easy asking players to chop and change but in some positions - blind-side flanker and No 8 for instance, or stand-off and inside centre - it is less of a problem."

Interesting. What price Mike Catt, the Bath stand-off, filling the cavernous gap left by his mercurial club-mate? Woodward would not be drawn on specifics but his obvious willingness to explore every conceivable possibility throws open the exciting prospect of a brand new midfield axis.

Woodward was more forthcoming on his plans for a successful negotiation of this autumn's triple-header with the southern hemisphere invasion force. In effect, the 36 squad members will be a touring party in their own country, staying together for the four-week duration of the pre-Christmas international programme.

The All Blacks will play midweek matches against England A, England Emerging Players and an Allied Dunbar Premiership Select, but all three sides will be drawn from Woodward's squad. "I don't want people sitting on a bench for a month," said the coach. "They'll all get a chance to play."



## Who is the greatest?

Who is the greatest footballer of all time? Now you can help us choose. Because England, the home of the world's greatest sport, is about to become the permanent venue for the International Football Hall of Fame, backed by the Independent and the Professional Footballers' Association. And we need you to decide which of the game's heroes should be first to be inducted.

Over the next few weeks with your help, we will pick the best 25 of all time to be inducted in November in the official Hall of Fame. To qualify, your pick must have played for his country and have retired for three years.

So get voting now. What we need you to do is nominate up to four players for election to the Hall of Fame. Simply follow the instructions on the right.

Internet: You can also cast your vote on the Internet at [www.sporting-life.com](http://www.sporting-life.com). This is how it all works.

● A player of any nationality can be elected. He must have been retired for three years and have gained a full cap. Anyone can make up to four nominations.

● A nomination must be sent to the International Football Hall of Fame on an Official Voting Form, by telephone to a registered number, or via the Internet.

● Voting ends on Sunday November 9, 1997. The five players with most nominations will automatically be elected.

● A Selection Committee made up of seven retired players from different countries, with a chairman from the PFA, will draw up a short list of 60 players from those who receive most votes. This list is given to a panel of football journalists, chaired by the Mirror's Harry Harris. Each will choose a top 20. The 20 players who receive most votes will be elected.

## Who is the greatest?

When selecting your players for the International Hall of Fame, you have the chance to make FOUR votes and four votes ONLY. Remember your votes count, as the top five players overall from all the votes received will automatically go into The Hall of Fame.

In the table below, we have listed 250 players who could all be in contention. To make your selection, all you have to do is select your choice of up

## Who is the greatest?

to four players. If you wish you may select only one, but FOUR is the maximum. Select up to four players, noting down their code numbers and then call 0930 565 996.

First of all, you will be asked to carry out a quick test to determine what type of phone you have. You will then be directed to enter your chosen player codes. At the end of the call, you will be asked to leave your name and address. Your votes will be

registered against your name. VOTE NOW on: 0930 565 996

If the player or players you wish to vote for are not listed below, you can vote for them by using the form below and sending it to: The Independent, Hall of Fame, PO Box 6927, London E3 3NZ. Postal entries must be received by November 8.

Please note, you should use the form only if your selections are not listed in

## Who is the greatest?

the table below. If you experience problems voting, call our helpline: 0990 800 283. You cannot register your vote on this line. Vote lines close on November 9, 1997. Republic of Ireland number is 1550 123 302 (Tone phones only).

Calls should last no more than two mins. 50p per minute at all times. Calls from Republic of Ireland cost 58p per minute include VAT.

## The players

CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM
001	David O'Leary	Ireland	101	Alan Hansen	Scotland	201	Alan Hansen	Scotland	301	Alan Hansen	Scotland
002	Kevin Keegan	England	102	John Wozniak	Scotland	202	John Wozniak	Scotland	302	John Wozniak	Scotland
003	Paul Scholes	England	103	John Wozniak	Scotland	203	John Wozniak	Scotland	303	John Wozniak	Scotland
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CODE

PLAYER

TEAM

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PLAYER

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CODE

PLAYER

TEAM

CODE

PLAYER

TEAM

001

David O'Leary

Ireland

101

Alan Hansen

Scotland

201

Alan Hansen

Scotland

301

Alan Hansen

Scotland

002

Kevin Keegan

England

102

John Wozniak

Scotland

202

John Wozniak

Scotland

302

John Wozniak

Scotland

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Paul Scholes

England

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John Wozniak

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Paul Scholes

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Paul Scholes

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Paul Scholes

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John Wozniak

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Paul Scholes

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Paul Scholes

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John Wozniak

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## Global fame leaves beret-wearing Jordan unable to lose himself in France

There was a time when basketball superstar Michael Jordan would visit Paris for the fun of it and sit in pavement cafés unrecognised. No more. John Lichfield reports from the French capital.

Michael Jordan would like to announce that he is not God.

The best known sportsman in the world is in Paris, making his first competitive visit to Europe in five years. He turned up for the introductory press conference yesterday, wearing a Chicago Bulls track suit and a large, black French beret. "When you're in France, do as the French do," he explained, just about keeping a straight face. "This is kind of my French look."

Except, of course, that hardly anyone in France – certainly no one under 30 – wears a beret any more. They wear baseball caps, and Michael Jordan basketball trainers, and, in many cases, Michael Jordan T-shirts.

Jordan, 34, has been to Paris before, lots of times. He visited twice to play basketball, as a young man, before he was the best-loved and best-paid sportsman in the global village. Until a few years ago, he explained, he used to come back "every other year" because it was one of the few places he could disappear. "I could just sit down outside some restaurant and not be bothered. Basketball has grown so big, it is hard for me to go anywhere now."

In the pouring rain outside the Bercy stadium yesterday, a large group of French youngsters pleaded with the security man to let them in, to have one peep at their

idol in training. Since this was France, the answer was, rather rudely, no.

Later, Jordan was asked what it was like to be mistaken for God. "I'm not a god. I consider myself as an entertainer. I play basketball and take joy in what I do. For a couple of hours I can carry people away from whatever else is going on in their lives. That is all. I entertain. I certainly don't consider myself as a god."

Jordan is, however, one of those rare sportsmen whose fame transcends their sport. The global success of basketball can partly be explained by the urbanisation of the world: basketball, an intense, claustrophobic sport, is an urban game par excellence. But the global success is also partly down to the charisma and skill of Michael Jordan.

He is in Paris with the Chicago Bulls – five times National Basketball Association

champions in the last seven years – to play in the McDonald's championship against Greek, Spanish, Italian and French clubs. The Bulls' first game is tomorrow night. Before leaving the US, Jordan had been quoted as saying that this would be a chance for Chicago to turn on the style, away from the competitive pressures of the NBA. His comments irritated some of the European players. They said that, on the contrary, this was the real "world championship" not the purely American challenge of the NBA.

Jordan was smoothly diplomatic on this point yesterday. He said that, judging by the European players coming to perform in the US, the European game had made "enormous progress". Offensively, he said, European players no longer had much to learn from the US; defensively

they still had some way to go. As for the "world championship", he said the Bulls could beat any opposition, European or American, "if we play the game the way we know how". He did not see the absence of the other great Bulls' stars – Scottie Pippen (foot injury) and Dennis Rodman (bronchitis) – as a serious problem.

Jordan was asked about rumours that he intended to retire (for the second time) at the end of the forthcoming NBA season. It was up to the Chicago Bulls, he said. If they felt the time had come to rebuild the team with younger players and a new coach, then "it will be time for me to move on".

A new coach would want to introduce "new approaches and new rhythms. I've been through that before and I don't want to go through that again".

Jordan has brought his family with him and intends to do some sightseeing, even



Michael Jordan at the Bercy stadium yesterday. Photograph: AP

if his pavement café days are over. He hoped, he said at one point, to "take in the Louvre". He presumably meant to say the Louvre. Unless...

Michael Jordan has already tried golf and baseball, with mixed success. Is he planning to move on to winter sports? That really would be a story.

## The self-serving attitudes killing British athletics

The financial failure of the British Athletics Federation threatens the future of the sport in this country. Mike Rowbottom examines its collapse and suggests a way forward.

As the three wise men from the insolvency practitioners picked through the wreckage of the British Athletics Federation's finances yesterday, two questions resonated in track and field circles.

How could Britain's most successful Olympic sport have got itself into such a dire situation? And where should it go from here?

The basic answer to the first query was spelt out on Tuesday by David Moorcroft, the newly installed BAF chief executive, who has seen what he understood to be a cash flow problem turn into the stuff of nightmares.

Falling sponsorship income, and lower levels of money in television rights have chipped away at the reserves of £1.2m that the Federation announced in 1994.

At the same time, costs have risen, due in part to legal fees incurred in defending the Federation against a claim for £500,000 in damages from Diane Modahl after her successful appeal against a doping ban.

Three years ago, the then executive chairman of BAF, Peter Radford, emphasised the need for the Federation to diversify from its dependence upon television money and sponsorship for big televised meetings.

That is something the Federation has signally failed to do. The most obvious, practical method of raising steady revenue is a registration scheme. Five or ten pounds per head per athlete per year. Net result to the sport: around two million pounds.

That sort of cash would have been more than handy right now. But such has been the resistance from the grass roots, and so archaic is the adminis-



Happier times: Linford Christie, Britain's team captain, celebrates after the men's victory in the European Cup in Munich in June – Britain's first win since 1989. Photograph: Empics

trative system in British athletics, where all decisions have to be approved by an unwieldy 38-strong council, that Radford and his fellow professionals could not institute the measure.

The institution of a registration scheme was on the agenda for informal discussions due to take place last night between the BAF, the Sports Council and the Amateur Athletic Association of England.

Many in the sport suspect that the latter body, which has never got along with the BAF, is waiting to occupy the power vacuum which has been created by BAF's insolvency.

The question of releasing some of the funds the AAA has accrued over the last few years – more than £1m – is something which is currently exercising minds in the Sports Council, which holds the ultimate sanction of stopping the flow of National Lottery money into the sport.

The Lottery panel have also made it clear in the past that they do not like handing over public money to organisations with archaic administrations.

Perhaps this traumatic time will offer the opportunity to transform the Council from being the sport's House of Com-

mons to its House of Lords – a measure which is long overdue.

John Lister, who quit his position as BAF treasurer 18 months ago, spoke yesterday about the crucial misjudgements made when the BAF assumed control of the sport in 1991.

"The fundamental danger that was dropped came in the handover of responsibility for the sport from the Amateur Athletic Association to BAF," he said. "While the AAA agreed to surrender all responsibility for events, coaching, administration and international competition, they kept their reserve fund of around £3m.

"Not only that, they forced BAF to sign a contract that meant they took around 40 per cent of their profits. That meant that in the first three years of BAF's reign, when the money was still flowing in, the AAA took around £500,000 in cash from them."

"The problem was there was no will on the board of directors of BAF to face up to realities. It is a tragedy for the sport. The Federation has destroyed itself, and the problem is that you can't have any confidence in what is left behind in the shape of the AAA of England."

"As a body they have been

waiting for this to happen without being prepared to do anything to stop it. The only place to look for a new beginning now is to the Sports Council. If we are not careful we could be watching the death of athletics not only in Britain, but around the world."

The immediate problem is paying athletes for their competitive efforts this season, and guaranteeing events planned for next year.

Channel 4, who have a £3.3m contract to televise domestic athletics for the next four years, said yesterday they were monitoring the situation closely.

Another proposal which might yield dividends for the sport is the reformation of the current boundaries within the overall AAA. At the moment there are three arbitrary blocks: Northern, Midland and South.

Splitting the sport into smaller units could access new sources of income from regional development agencies.

In the meantime, the BAF staff are working a day at a time, waiting to hear if and when they will lose their jobs.

"If I was in the position now of deciding if I wished to be chief executive of BAF," Moorcroft said, "clearly I wouldn't."

### MOTOR RACING

## Mosley urges Villeneuve to drop appeal

Max Mosley, the top administrator in motor sport, yesterday urged Jacques Villeneuve to drop his appeal against disqualification at the Japanese Grand Prix.

Mosley, the president of the FIA, the international governing body of motor sport, warned that the Williams-Renault driver could be suspended for the season's final grand prix in Jerez, Spain, on Sunday week, giving the world title to his German rival, Michael Schumacher.

"There is a risk that Villeneuve could lose not only two points from Suzuka, but also be suspended for Jerez," he said.

"It would be a nightmare for Bernie Ecclestone [the head of Formula One], but the court is independent," added Mosley, in a reference to the FIA's court of appeal which is due to meet next Tuesday in Paris. "If Williams would withdraw their appeal, I can imagine that they would stick to the two-points deduction."

"I have sympathy for him [Villeneuve] and I understand that he wants to drive as fast as possible, but I want to see him alive after the end of his career. He endangered not only himself, but the stewards, who are volunteers with families."

Villeneuve was disqualified for ignoring waved yellow caution flags during free practice while under a suspended ban for the same offence imposed at the Italian Grand Prix last month. He was allowed to race at Suzuka pending an appeal.

Villeneuve finished fifth in the race won for Ferrari by Schumacher, the French-Canadian's only rival for the title who has 78 points to Villeneuve's 79.

The 38-year-old Austrian driver Gerhard Berger is to retire from Formula One after the final race of the season in Jerez, according to an Austrian newspaper. The Benetton-Renault driver has won 10 grands prix in his career.

## The short but amazing life of Hunter Mariners

How can a club with few friends and no prospects be 80 minutes away from being recognised as the best rugby league team in the world?

Dave Hadfield looks at the strange story of the Hunter Mariners, who meet Brisbane Broncos tomorrow in the final of the World Club Championship.

Millwall supporters used to boast, and probably still do, that "Nobody likes us. We don't care."

The case of the Hunter Mariners is subtly different. They have no supporters to speak of. Nobody wants them and they are positively thriving.

By rights, the club should have been quietly put to sleep by now, at the end of its first season. It was only set up by Super League as a spoiler on the turf of one of the Australian Rugby League's best-supported clubs, the Newcastle Knights.

The Mariners were a creation of war and they will be a casualty of peace, which could break out within the next few days.

The trouble is that the Mariners are clinging stubbornly to their life-line, extending their season by first qualifying for the quarter-finals of the World Club Championship and then by beating Wigan and Cronulla to reach tomorrow's final against the Brisbane Broncos in Auckland.

They have proved that they deserve to survive, but the most they can force is a stay of execution. One of the few things both sides of the battle in Australia have been agreed upon is that there should only be one team in Newcastle. And that will be the Knights, who won the ARL's Grand Final for the first time last month.

Ask the Hunter coach, Graham Murray, how his club can compete and he shrugs his shoulders and says: "They had 100,000 people at a ticker-tape parade. You can't argue with that."

Unlike the Knights, the Mariners are largely unloved in their home town. They are more likely to have bricks thrown through their office windows than ticker-tape parades.

Yet, somehow, from this hopeless situation, they have found strength and inspiration. Every match could be their last if they lost it – so they have re-

sponded by refusing to lose, thus grafting a compelling storyline on to the WCC. They might only have one season, but it is going to be one to remember.

Newcastle – the New South Wales one – might have miles of beach at the end of its main street and wine might have displaced coal as the major money-earner, but it is still a tough, working-class town that takes a fierce pride in its rugby league heritage.

Many of Australia's greatest players have come from the area, but until 1988 they generally had to move 100 miles down the coast to Sydney to make their names. So, when Newcastle got its own team in what was then the Winfield Cup almost a decade ago, it quickly went deep into the psyche of the place.

Having failed to persuade the Knights – and most particularly their former Great Britain coach, Malcolm Reilly – to defect, Super League poached as many administrators and players as they could and planted the Mariners on their patch. As a move aimed primarily at damaging the Knights, it was bitterly resented in the town.

To have fashioned a winning rugby team out of such unpromising circumstances is a remarkable achievement and

speaks volumes for the abilities of Murray, the former Illawarra coach, who has proved their most important signing.

What he has had to work with is a handful of former Knights, like Brad Godden, Robbie McCormack and Paul Marquet, plus players who had signed for Super League and were not wanted elsewhere – like the Iro brothers, for instance.

The Mariners did not exactly sweep all before them – their WCC semi-final victory at Cronulla was their first away from home in Australia – but they beat all the big guns. Brisbane, Cronulla, and Canberra, on their own ground.

It is in the WCC, coinciding as it has with peace moves that herald their doom, that they have come good. "They can't kill us off while we're still playing," says McCormack, and it is that incentive that has kept them alive.

There could even be life after death, with the idea already mooted that the Mariners could be moved, more or less intact, to Wales, Scotland or Melbourne for next season.

There would be a lot of sense in launching a new franchise on the back of the sort of spirit that the Mariners have shown over the past few weeks, but Melbourne already have a coach in

Chris Anderson and not all the Hunter players would welcome relocation across the globe.

Tomorrow, therefore, is effectively their swan-song, win or lose: the end of a short but extraordinary life.

They will not go quietly, not with players like their young half-backs, Scott Hill and Brett Kimmorley, who have combined so magically of late. Nor with the New Zealand loose-forward, Tyrone Smith, showing his true potential. Nor with a full-back of the calibre of Robbie Ross attacking from deep.

But, if Kevin Iro is absent with a groin strain, it will further weaken an already dicey goalkicking department – and they are up against the best club side in the world.

Even without Allan Langer, who is also almost certain to miss the Tests against Great Britain, the Broncos are packed with talent, starting with their dazzling full-back, Darren Lockyer, continuing through the world's best centre, Steve Renouf, and including forwards as destructive as Gordon Tallis.

The Mariners have no chance against that sort of firepower. But they had no chance against Wigan or Cronulla either. Logic has little part in it when a team shouldn't even exist.

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## FOOTBALL

### Le Tissier's race to be part of Hoddle's plan

Matthew Le Tissier is back among the goals but knows he still has a long way to go before returning to Glenn Hoddle's World Cup squad. Martin Lipton on a realistic Saint.

Matt Le Tissier yesterday conceded he is a few lengths behind the field in the most important race of his career. But the Southampton player finally feels he is under starter's orders.

And after proving just what he can bring to England's World Cup party at Barnsley last night, the Channel Islander is convinced he can come from behind to claim a place in Glenn Hoddle's thinking.

"It's a start," said Le Tissier of his wonder volley that saw him flick the ball over Arjan de Zeeuw before crashing in from 25 yards. "But there will have to be a few more of them before the season's out to convince the manager that I'm worth a place."

"As far as I'm concerned it's up to me to show I deserve to force my way back in. There's a lot of players who have done well since I've been out. They've probably edged ahead of me in the pecking order. Now it's down to me to fight my way back."

Le Tissier's England fortunes have waned since Hoddle picked him for the home defeat by Italy, and a series of injuries meant he has not featured since.

However, Le Tissier still believes he can play a massive part for Hoddle in France next summer, a feeling not harmed when Hoddle's assistant, John Gorman, yesterday stressed that the door remains wide open,

adding: "Nobody is ruled in or out yet."

Le Tissier's Southampton team-mate Kevin Davies, whose late goal moved Saints through to the last 16, has no doubts. "He's unbelievable and the goal summed him up," the teenager said. "We found out on the coach that it was his 29th birthday and we all knew he'd do something special - he writes his own scripts!"

"If you've got a player with that much ability he should definitely be in the squad next summer. He's just a natural."

Le Tissier's smile showed how much the goal meant to him, even though his response to the suggestion that he cannot have scored many better was: "Yeah, I have!"

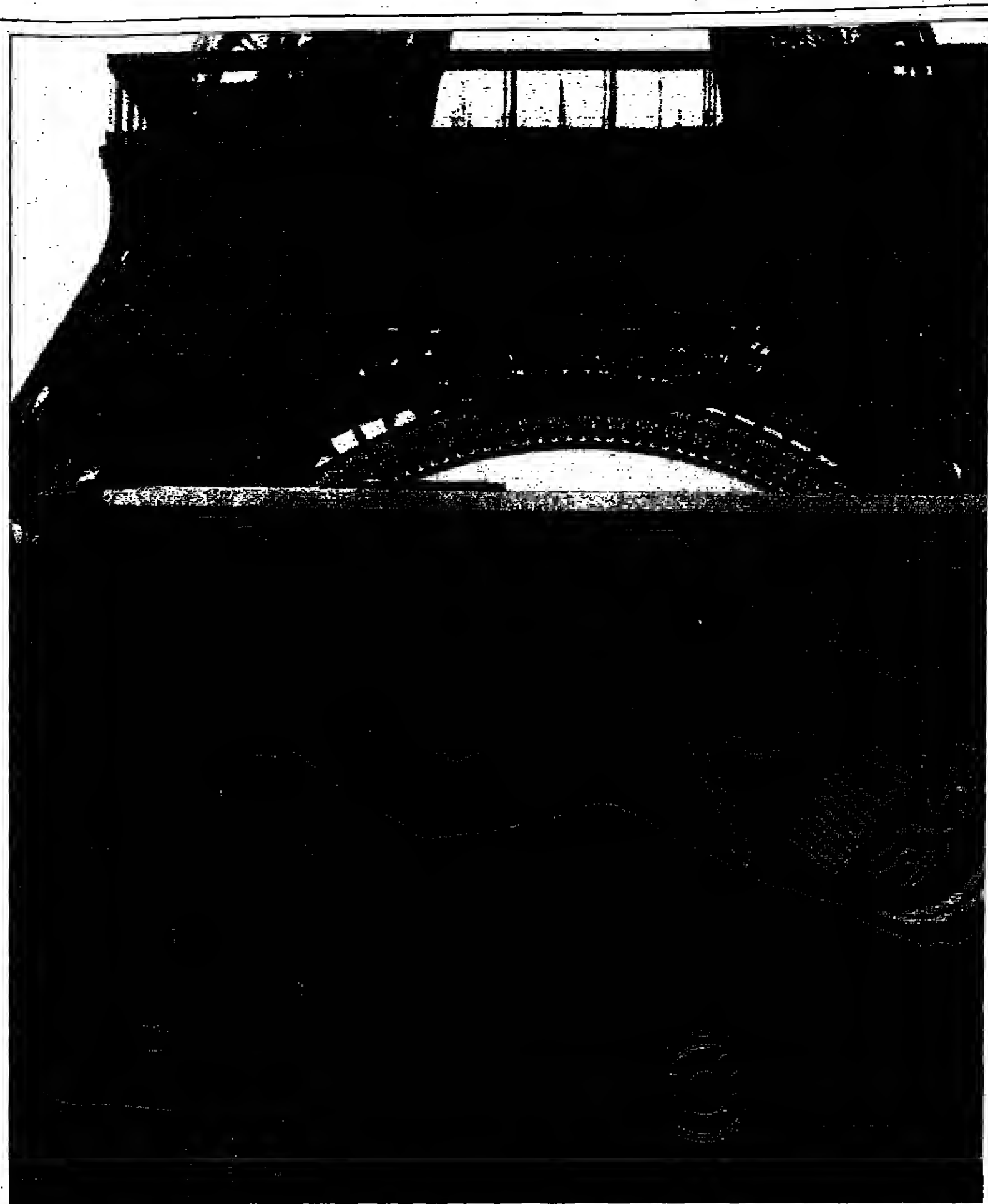
He added: "It was a good strike. Once I flicked it over the defender it fell so nicely I had a surge of confidence and as soon as I hit it I knew it was going in the back of the net."

"I've got some catching up on that front though as well, with the goals Steve McNamara and Dennis Bergkamp have been scoring. "What Bergkamp did to get 1-2-3 in goal of the month was some achievement and it will probably never be matched again - but it won't stop me trying."

But what Le Tissier needs above all now is an injury-free spell after his summer was disrupted by an elbow problem.

"I'm getting over the injury," he said. "All I want now is to get a decent run of games behind me to get myself 100 per cent."

"It's still not there yet, and I'm getting little strains while I'm getting used to the pace of the game again. Hopefully, the major things are behind me and I can look forward to the rest of the season."



Towering spectacle: the larger than life figure of Scottie Pippen adorns the side of the Chicago Bulls tour bus as the American basketball team stop by the Eiffel Tower on their arrival in Paris yesterday for the McDonald's Championship. Report, page 30

### League will not punish 'reserve' sides

The Football League has chosen not to take any action against Manchester United and Arsenal for fielding under-strength sides in Tuesday's Coca-Cola Cup ties.

After threatening both clubs with possible expulsion if they did not field their strongest possible line-ups, the League has backed down. "We appreciate that the senior clubs in the country operate a squad system and with that in mind we are able to enforce a degree of flexibility and latitude," its press spokesman, Chris Hull, said.

The League is also renewing its efforts to reclaim a place for the Coca-Cola winners in next season's UEFA Cup.

Scotland have been invited to play the World Cup hosts, France, in a friendly at St Etienne, one of the venues for the finals, on 12 November.

Wolves have agreed a fee of about £800,000 with Crystal Palace for Dougie Freedman. The 23-year-old striker will discuss personal terms at Molineux today.

Fulham are ready to pay Arsenal £700,000 for the midfielder Ian Selley. Crews Alexandra's offer of a club record £750,000 for Dave Watton has been accepted by Shrewsbury, but the 24-year-old defender has so far failed to agree personal terms.

Bolton Wanderers are setting up an exchange deal to sell the midfielder Jamie Pollock to Aston Villa in exchange for the former Leicester forward, Julian Joachim. Bolton are likely to accept about £700,000 plus Joachim in exchange for Pollock.

Blackburn Rovers and Rangers have both made enquiries for Wimbledon's Scottish international goalkeeper, Neil Sullivan.

The Liverpool and Republic of Ireland defender, Phil Babb has been ruled out of action for a month after suffering cracked ribs in training.

Manchester City have admitted unfairly sacking their former youth development officer, Colin Bell and Terry Farrell, in May, and will pay them both compensation. The club had been taken to an industrial tribunal, at which a settlement was negotiated.

### Keller issues a warning to 'complacent' Leicester

The Leicester City goalkeeper, Kasey Keller, fears his side could face a relegation battle this season if they continue to rest on their laurels.

Martin O'Neill's side may be in an elevated position in the Premiership, but a promising season is suddenly becoming more difficult by the day.

Any hopes of UEFA Cup glory, as the club tested the Eu-

ropean waters for the first time in 36 years, were quickly banished by Spain's Atletico Madrid and the brilliance of Brazil's Juninho.

Further misery soon followed with the first Premiership defeat of the season at Filbert Street coming at the hands of local rivals Derby via a double from the Italian Francesco Ba-

However, there were no Continental forces at work in last night's Coca-Cola Cup humiliation, just sheer typical English grit and determination from Alan Buckley's battling Grimsby - characteristics which carried Leicester to long overdue glory in April.

But the cup holders relinquished their grip on the trophy they won with such pride

and passion, as they were first rattled and then humbled by the Mariners.

Three goals in nine minutes during the second half was Grimsby's just reward for their never-say-die attitude - a facet of Leicester's make-up which seems to have disappeared.

Keller, who produced a string of outstanding saves during that second period which saved Leicester from more embarrassment, said: "We are better than that - much better than that. But we need to get back to the Leicester that everybody knows, up the work-rate and try harder like we know we can. We have put ourselves in a good position so far, but there's a long way to go in the Premiership season just to ensure we stay up."

The United States interna-

tional added: "We have no right to be in this League and no right to be in fourth place. You have to fight for everything you get just like every other team does. We are about being a hard-working team, an honest team that fights for one another until the end of a game. Now it's time to get back to it."

However, injuries are beginning to hamper Leicester's season as the captain, Steve Walsh, could be out for another month after cracking a rib, despite initial reports suggesting he had broken his arm.

Walsh, who only returned to the side last night after three weeks on the sidelines with a hamstring injury, will be joined in the treatment room by his fellow defender Julian Watts who suffered concussion and facial injuries.

Watts definitely misses this Saturday's game at Chelsea, and O'Neill is now in the middle of a crisis as he was also without five first team regulars for last night's disaster.

Meanwhile, the Grimsby defender Kevin Johling is hoping to land a new contract from the club as he has been on week-to-week terms since the start of the season. His first goal in Town colours for nearly three years could help him go a long way towards achieving his aim. He said: "I was in nosebleed territory when I scored."

The 28-year-old, who started his career with Leicester before moving to Blundell Park in 1987, added: "I don't score many but when I do they are important. But I'm just trying to earn myself a new contract and hopefully I can do that."

**THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD**  
No.331. Thursday 16 October By Mass Wednesday's solution

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**ACROSS**

- 1 Dump's an empty place (6)
- 4 Dash off second copy (6)
- 10 Bird fellow cast in fancy green porcelain (9,6)
- 11 Captures Knight hemmed in by little men (5)
- 12 One drawing blind - concealing manoeuvre (9)
- 13 Profane passage (6)
- 15 Strip, short strip, players put on (6)
- 16 A fencing piece with name inscribed obliquely (6)
- 18 cinema's new chiller distributors (6)
- 21 I draw in fish? These lines are certainly helpful (9)
- 22 One with the hump appeared lively at first (5)
- 23 They never get tight (15)
- 24 Join society and get more senior (6)
- 25 Like a building, on one side incorporating stack? (6)

**DOWN**

- 1 Dimly seeing soft mat outside (6)
- 2 Dog has the patter, without Bellman's physiognomy (8,7)
- 3 Fits rails (5)
- 5 Mild man, in speech, beginning to bluster in drink (9)
- 6 Score during play (10,5)
- 7 Spirit's showing in choristers (6)
- 8 Guy reportedly on the French river (6)
- 9 Dread slip in high land (6)
- 14 Lag, carrying article, one like a dead-weight (9)
- 17 No hint of spark in dry figure (6)
- 18 Indolent, absorbing Sunday Supplement? (6)
- 19 Viewers, in short, detecting orbit, satellite's first (6)
- 20 Smart if dropped from group? (6)
- 22 Bluff with King, making trick (5)

## ATHLETICS

### Johnson and Bailey join queue of creditors

After the news that the British Athletics Federation has gone into administration with huge debts, it has emerged that it is not only British athletes who will feel the cost but some of the biggest names in the sport. Mike Rowbottom surveys the mess.

The financial collapse of the BAF has left foreign athletes such as Michael Johnson and Donovan Bailey out of pocket. It was revealed yesterday.

A spokesperson for BAF, which announced on Tuesday that it had gone into administration with a deficit of £500,000, confirmed that international athletes were in the same situation as British com-

petitors who are awaiting payment for summer appearances.

Bailey, the Canadian world record holder and Olympic champion at 100 metres, appeared twice in Britain, at Sheffield and Crystal Palace. His management confirmed yesterday that he has not yet been paid for the latter race, where he was supposed to receive around £50,000 (£32,000).

"It is a matter of some concern, and we will be following it up with BAF," a spokesman said.

Johnson's lacklustre performance in the 17 August meeting in London, where he finished fifth in the 200m and then pulled out of the relay, earned him widespread criticism. But the BAF promotions officer, Ian Stewart, maintained afterwards that there would be no question of docking a fee thought to be around \$100,000. "A deal is a deal," Stewart said at the time. But the matter has been taken out of

his hands now and rests with the newly appointed interim managers.

Diane Modahl, who is pursuing £500,000 worth of damages from BAF following her acquittal from doping charges, would have to take her place in the queue of creditors should she be successful.

"My understanding is that BAF have already spent half a million pounds on legal costs," Modahl's husband, Vicente said. "After the appeal we would have settled for a small amount and an apology. But BAF continued to take instruction from the International Amateur Athletic Federation to fight the case."

Meanwhile, Britain's bid for the 2003 World Championships is on hold, and the staging of the 1999 World Cross-Country Championships in Northern Ireland is also in doubt.

Self-serving attitudes, page 30

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